

Palestinians losing millions per day

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The Palestinians are losing between \$6 and \$10 million per day in revenue from the siege Israel has imposed on the Gaza Strip and West Bank following violent fighting last week, economic experts said Friday. Dr. Samir Abdullah, a Palestinian expert in economics, said that the siege, which prevents Palestinians from leaving their cities, has harmed the gross domestic product (GDP) by at least 60 per cent, or between \$6 and \$8 million per day. The annual Palestinian GDP is \$360 million, Mr. Abdullah said. He said losses to the gross national product (GNP) were even higher because they include the losses in income of Palestinians who work outside the Palestinian autonomous areas. More than 30,000 Palestinians have been barred from working in Israel since the fighting.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية مستقلة سياسية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرأى

Volume 21 Number 6343

AMMAN SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1996, JUMADA 1, 22, 1417

Price: Jordan 150 Fils

King: Washington summit neither a complete success nor complete failure

Disaster was the situation before the summit; at stake was the entire future of the quest for peace; Jordan disappointed by Israeli failure to inform it of tunnel opening; Kingdom hopes Sunday's meeting will be a new beginning

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein, in a series of interviews with American and Jordanian media, said last week's Arab-Israeli summit could not be described as a complete failure or success but expressed disappointment that the meeting's results fell short of Jordanian and Arab expectations.

In separate interviews with several media organisations, including the Public Broadcasting Service, Cable News Network and Jordan Television, the King also criticised Israel's failure to honour its agreements with the Palestinians.

Such failure, he said, was fuelling militancy.

While the Washington summit was neither a complete failure nor a complete success, the King told CNN, there were certainly "some very, very serious problems that need to be addressed."

The King expressed hope that progress would be made towards resolving those problems in Palestinian-Israeli talks scheduled to begin on Sunday under American auspices at the Erez crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip.

In reply to a question on comments by Palestinian negotiators that the Washington summit was failure due to Israeli intransigence, the King said: "As far as I am concerned...all the hopes, all the achievements are in the interests of the Israelis and the Palestinians, the Arabs and the

entire region..."

The King said Jordan shared the suffering of the Palestinian people.

"We are feeling with them, poverty, hunger, despair, isolation; yet I believe that peace will come...we continue to try our utmost to see a solution to the problem. I believe that is in everybody's interest if this happens," he said.

In comments on Jordan Television on Thursday night, King Hussein urged both Palestinians and Israelis to give dialogue a chance in the talks beginning on Sunday.

"We have to give room for dialogue that will begin in the next few days...There is a need for endurance and patience in this phase and not to be led by emotions, knowing that this moves all of us," the King said.

The King said: "Enemies of peace" were seeking to exploit raised emotions after last week's Israeli-Palestinian clashes triggered by Israel's opening of a second entrance to a tunnel near Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem.

The resumption of Israeli-Palestinian talks was the main outcome of the Washington summit, which was attended by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as well as King Hussein himself and U.S. President Bill Clinton, the host.

The King criticised Israel for failing to implement its accords with the Palestinians, saying this was falling into the hands of opponents of the



Middle East peace process.

The King told Jordan Television: "One should not be carried away by sentiments which are affecting all of us because this is perhaps what the enemies of peace, the enemies of man and life expect to see as they see their chance lies in what has happened and in the Israeli delay in the implementation of commitments and agreements."

It is "not permissible" for Israel to say it was committed to peace accords signed with the Palestinians while then failing to honour them, said the King.

"In fact my message is not addressed to those who were here in the summit. In the summit I expressed by views frankly vis-a-vis various issues pertaining to the rights of the Palestinians to Jerusalem, Hebron and all that has earlier been agreed upon as well as the rights of our brothers in their national homeland. And I demanded that the Palestinians be treated with

respect..." the King said.

The King paid tribute to Mr. Arafat for "shouldering very big responsibilities and adopting a position that has exposed him to a lot of dangers..."

Mr. Arafat "has sincerely stood in defence of his people's rights on their national soil and for peace," the King added.

"My message which I address to the Arab and Jewish communities in the United States and to the Israelis and all people who believe in peace and defend it and those who want peace is that they have to raise their voices at this stage and should urge all responsible people to carry out their duty towards the future generations."

In an interview with John Lehrer of Public Broadcasting Services, the King disagreed that the Washington summit was a "disaster" and stressed that "the disaster was the situation we faced just before" the meeting.

"I believe if it hadn't taken place, we would have been in much more serious difficulty, and I am very grateful to the president and to the administration for inviting us over," the King said. "I think it helped create an atmosphere and it brought about a commitment as well to have talks in the area between the Palestinians and the Israelis..." he added in a reference to the agreement to resume the negotiations on Sunday.

The flare-up of Palestinian-Israeli violence, the King said.

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Two Palestinian girls walk past a row of armed Israeli policemen as they leave the Al Aqsa Mosque after Friday prayers (Reuters photo)

Palestinians keep protests in check in anticipation of resumed talks

Combined agency dispatches

KEEN TO RESUME negotiations in an atmosphere of calm, Israelis and Palestinians enforced a tense quiet across the West Bank and Gaza Strip on Friday despite calls by militants for protest marches after noon prayers.

In Hebron, the last West Bank city under occupation, Israeli soldiers and plainclothes Palestinian agents patrolled a week-old curfew that has kept its Palestinian residents indoors most of the day.

At Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque, the site of deadly clashes last week, Palestinian clerics pleaded with dozens of youths to quit throwing stones at Israeli police.

In the Gaza Strip, Israeli and Palestinian security officers toured the points of friction and discussed how to prevent more hostilities.

In the West Bank of Jenin, Israel lifted an internal closure imposed on all Palestinian cities, allowing residents in Jenin to leave the town, a Palestinian officer said.

The talks resume Sunday at a border crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip, and U.S. officials said Secretary of State Warren Christopher would arrive there the same day as part of an American effort to get the troubled negotiations going again.

Since their "summit" in Washington, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have

tried to reduce the tensions that flared in the wake of last week's gunbattles between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian police.

Mr. Netanyahu's cabinet announced after its weekly meeting Friday that the siege of West Bank towns, imposed last week, would be gradually lifted if clashes did not erupt again. The closure that separates Israel from the Palestinian territories, however, would remain in place indefinitely.

Mr. Arafat, in turn, issued orders to the 30,000 armed men under his command to prevent any violence.

On Friday, following a meeting of Israeli and Palestinian security officers, Israel lifted the siege on the West Bank city of Jenin, allowing residents to leave the city.

Israeli and Palestinian officers in the Gaza Strip also met Friday and toured friction points. The sides marked an area of 300 metres which the Palestinian police will maintain as a buffer zone against the penetration of Palestinian protesters, an army spokesman said.

The sides also agreed to the opening Sunday of the Carni border crossing into the Gaza Strip to allow the transport of food, after Palestinian police agreed to downgrade their arms from automatic rifles to pistols, Israel Radio reported.

A long-overdue Israeli withdrawal from Hebron is at the top of the Palestinian agenda in the talks, and Mr. Arafat appears eager to

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Senator Madi passes away

AMMAN (Petra) — Upper House of Parliament (Senate) Speaker Ahmad Lawzi Friday announced the death of Senator Sitan Mijhem Al Madi, who passed away Friday noon. Mr. Lawzi condoled the Senator's family in his name and on behalf of the Senate.

Shamir collapses in Paris

TEL AVIV (AP) — Former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, a mentor of Israel's current Premier Benjamin Netanyahu, collapsed in Paris Friday just before a scheduled interview with French Television. Israel's army radio said, Shamir, 81, is on a fundraiser tour of Europe for Israel's Jewish National Fund, which sponsors foresting and construction in the Jewish state, the report said.

Group urges 'real democracy' in Egypt

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's main human rights group said on Friday the introduction of "real democracy" was needed to limit the adoption of violence as the only means for change in the country. The Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights (EOHR) censured the government's attitude to disputes arising from parliamentary elections in 1995, for which the courts have annulled the results for 200 of the 444 seats.

Arafat demands role for Europe in peace talks

EU expected to press demand for active participation in peace process

Combined agency dispatches

PALESTINIAN LEADER Yasser Arafat called on Friday for a European presence in talks scheduled to start between Palestinian and Israeli officials on Sunday.

"We want an effective European role in the consolidation of the peace process in the Middle East and a European presence in future meetings with the Israelis, the first of which is to take place on Sunday (on the Israel-Gaza border)," Mr. Arafat told reporters after talks with French President Jacques Chirac.

Mr. Arafat said peace in the Middle East was just as important to the world at large as it was to Israelis and Palestinians.

Mr. Chirac, standing next to the Palestinian leader on the steps of the Elysee Palace, said he would immediately telephone Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to brief him on the discussions.

Mr. Arafat and Mr. Chirac met for 90 minutes after the Palestinian president's arrival from Italy, where he had also briefed government leaders on his Washington talks with Mr. Netanyahu.

Mr. Chirac said earlier European Union (EU) leaders were expected to call at their summit on Saturday for an active role in reviving the threatened Middle East peace process.

He said France and Italy had agreed at bilateral talks to ask their partners to issue the call at the Dublin meeting, adding: "I believe that everyone will agree with it."

The statement would affirm "the desire of Europe to take part in relaunching the peace process," Mr. Chirac told a joint news conference with Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi.

Mr. Arafat met separately with Mr. Prodi in Naples and with Mr. Chirac in Paris to brief them on last week's inconclusive Washington Middle East summit.

President Bill Clinton called the talks after five days of bloody clashes between Israelis and Palestinians.

The Washington meeting brought together the leaders of Israel, the Palestinian National Authority and Jordan but had no European presence.

France, which has irked some of its EU partners with its own Middle East initiatives, and other European countries have been irritated by their apparent exclusion from U.S.-driven efforts while footing the bill for economic aid in the region.

Mr. Chirac said Saturday's statement would stress the need for a European role "in the face of the intolerance and hatred which has seemed to want to regain the upper hand in this region."

It would also refer to the "considerable" financial effort Europe was making, including aid and reconstruction help for the Pales-

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Christopher to offer additional help

Combined agency dispatches

U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE Warren Christopher will try to give a new round of Middle East peace talks a helpful jolt this weekend by holding separate talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

Announcing Mr. Christopher's quick trip to the region, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said on Friday, "it's clear the situation in the Middle East remains dangerous and requires intensive and productive efforts."

Mr. Christopher will fly to Israel Saturday and meet with Mr. Netanyahu on Sunday. He will also go to Gaza to see Mr. Arafat.

The new round of peace talks that was set in motion by President Bill Clinton's summit this week in Washington will open Sunday at Erez, a border crossing between Israel and Gaza.

Mr. Burns said Mr. Christopher spoke to Mr. Netanyahu by telephone on Friday and the prime minister told him Israel was easing restrictions on Palestinians in Bethlehem and Jenin on the West Bank.

Mr. Christopher will be looking for "the best ways to produce results as quickly as possible," Mr. Burns said.

The senior U.S. mediator for the Middle East, Dennis Ross, will participate in the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. Mr. Christopher will go ahead with a scheduled five-nation trip to Africa as

planned, Mr. Burns said. "There is a target of opportunity here," Mr. Burns said.

Mr. Clinton, in Chattanooga, New York, preparing for a debate Sunday with Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole, said he had asked Mr. Christopher to go to the Mideast before proceeding with the trip to Africa starting Monday in Mali.

"We discussed it. I asked him to go to the Middle East first," said Mr. Clinton.

Mr. Christopher had hinted on Thursday that he might visit the Mideast this weekend, noting that he has always held himself ready to go to there when he thought it might be helpful.

"I think I feel a particular responsibility to do that in

connection with talks that are about to begin at Erez," he said.

He said both sides in the Palestinian-Israeli summit meeting came out winners because they recommitted themselves to a peaceful future after last week's outbreak of violence.

During a picture session with Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahia, Mr. Christopher rejected the notion that the U.S.-sponsored summit meeting could be evaluated in terms of winners and losers.

"I think the conversation that took place, the commitment to a non-violent future, the commitment to have intensive, indeed continuous negotiation is a step forward," he said.

(Continued on page 7)

Israel's Peace Now group revives itself after violence

TEL AVIV (AP) — When Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin shook hands on the White House lawn, the Israeli peace movement packed away its "end the occupation" and "peace now" bumper stickers and banners.

Three years later, with the crack of bullets in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the signs and the slogans are back. Peace rallies have drawn tens of thousands of Israelis, and 300 reserve soldiers signed petitions saying they will refuse duty in the occupied territories.

"People are furious," said peace activist Peretz Kidron. "Expectations were created over the past three years, and now it looks like we're being thrown back down to the bottom of the pit."

In the week since deadly clashes erupted over Israel's opening of a new entrance to an archaeological tunnel in the Muslim quarter of Jerusalem's Old City, Israel has seen mass protests for the first time since the Palestinian uprising ended in 1993.

"The dream was fulfilled, the process seemed to be going by itself," said Alon Amnon of the group Peace Now, which Israeli reserve officers founded in 1978 to push for accelerated negotiations with Egypt.

Now in one week it seems that everything collapsed.

At a demonstration of about 15,000 people Tuesday night in Tel Aviv, Yossi Beilin, architect of the previous government's peace policies, said that unless Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu kept the promises of the Oslo accords, peace

activists would "flood every plaza, every intersection, every street."

"We gave Netanyahu a grace period — it's over," he said.

"People for the first time in years are angry," said Naomi Chazan, a legislator from the opposition Meretz Party.

"I've been to so many demonstrations my feet are killing me."

The past week has seen the reappearance of groups like Women in Black, which held weekly protest vigils during the intifada, and Yesh Gvul, which encouraged thousands of Israeli reservists to refuse to serve in the West Bank and Gaza during the intifada and in Lebanon during Israel's 1982 invasion. "It was pretty clear when Netanyahu was elected that we'd be seeing each other again," said Rita Mendes Flohr of Women in Black, as she stood on a Jerusalem street corner holding a sign reading, "Black September."

Mr. Kidron, an organizer of Yesh Gvul, said the group had collected 300 signatures in the past week on petitions declaring that Israeli army reserve soldiers "will not take part in the continued oppression of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and in guarding the settlements."

The group had celebrated with champagne when Mr. Rabin and Mr. Arafat began talks in 1993, Mr. Kidron said.

"We thought we were pensioning ourselves off — we'd done our job," he said. "But it seems we had to."

The rallies of the past week have been small compared to

those that drew hundreds of thousands at the peak of protests against the 1982 war in Lebanon. And they have attracted a homogeneous crowd of secular, well-off, European-descended Israelis — with none of the religious and Middle Eastern Jews or Russian immigrants who voted overwhelmingly for Mr. Netanyahu.

"The trouble is that all these movements are totally identified with the half of Israel that voted for (Shimon) Peres in the last elections," said columnist and longtime peace activist Uri Avneri. "They're completely alienated from the other half of Israel."

In the end, Mr. Avneri said, the peace movement can help lay the groundwork for change, but cannot make it happen.

The 1993 peace accord "was not brought about by peace now, it was brought about by the intifada," he said. Mr. Rabin decided to pull Israeli troops out of Gaza because Israelis were tired of having their soldiers killed there, he said.

Mr. Avneri said it may take more violence and deaths before the Israeli people and their leaders choose peace once again.

"There's a Palestinian army now, and you can either fight them or make peace with them," he said.

"It will happen to Netanyahu as it happened to Rabin. If you want cause for optimism, it is that the basic facts don't change. There are two peoples in this country, and when they are tired of killing each other, they will make peace."

Rabin's assassin and two others sentenced to jail for conspiracy

TEL AVIV (AP) — Calling them "sons of evil," a judge has sentenced Yitzhak Rabin's assassin and two co-conspirators to prison Thursday for plotting to kill the prime minister and attack Arabs.

"They decided what's good for Israel and what's not good for Israel, without a trace of regret and without any conscience," said Amnon Strashnov, chief judge of the Tel Aviv district court.

Yigal Amir, an Orthodox Jew, shouted "the law of God" as he left the courtroom.

Amir, 26, who is already serving a life sentence plus six years for Rabin's murder, was ordered to serve an additional five years for conspiring to attack Palestinians.

Amir said he only regretted not killing Rabin earlier because it would have pre-

vented last week's deadly violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"I'm proud of everything I did and would do it again," Amir, wearing a white t-shirt and black skullcap and flanked by guards on either side, bragged in his pre-sentencing statement.

"I'm sorry I didn't do it three years ago. It would have prevented all that's happening today. Everything that's happening today I predicted."

Amir, 26, has said he shot the premier last Nov. 4 to stop Rabin's government from turning over land in the West Bank and Gaza to the Palestinians, a process that began three years ago with the signing of the first Israel-Palestinian peace accords. Judge Strashnov said Rabin's assassination "struck at the heart of the nation and threatened to undermine democracy."

Amir's brother Hagai was sentenced Thursday to 12 years in prison for plotting to kill Rabin and attack Arabs, and on weapons charges. The Amirs' friend Dror Adani was sentenced to seven years.

Yigal Amir had faced a maximum sentence of 39 years on the conspiracy charges. Hagai Amir had faced up to 78 years and Adani up to 29 years.

Yigal Amir, who was frequently chastised for his in-court outbursts during the trial, interrupted the prosecutor Thursday to argue that he had acted alone when he assassinated Rabin and that his brother had tried to stop him. "If he hadn't been there I would have killed him three years ago," he said.

"One more word from you and I'm sending you out of the courtroom," Judge Strashnov said.



FLIGHT FROM DANGER: An Afghan woman carries her child as she flees from the Panjshir Valley, north of Kabul on Thursday amid a tense stand-off between fighters loyal to famed guerrilla chief Ahmad Shah Masood and the Taliban militia (Reuters photo)

Taliban regime takes shape in Kabul

KABUL (R) — Afghanistan's radical Taliban movement, has begun to pick up the reins of government from ousted President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

A week after their black-bearded warriors swept into Kabul in a virtually bloodless takeover, Taliban leaders are gearing up to take Afghanistan into a new era guided by their purist interpretation of Islamic Sharia law.

The man who founded the Taliban movement among Afghan refugees at religious schools in neighboring Pakistan has yet to appear in the capital, preferring to stay at his headquarters in the southern city of Kandahar.

But mullah Mohammad Omar, who was given the title of commander of the faithful by an assembly of Afghan religious clerics in Kandahar in April, is clearly held in awe by his followers and colleagues, who refer key decisions to the supreme Shura, or council, which he heads.

In a decree published in the movement's newspaper Shariat, Omar renewed

calls for the world to recognize the new administration and withdraw accreditation from all former government diplomatic missions.

Mr. Omar, 32, has also added mujahid (struggler) to his name, possibly a reference to his part in the jihad, or resistance to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s, which cost him one eye.

He named a six-man interim Shura to govern Afghanistan last Friday, the day Kabul fell to the Taliban. It is led by Mullah Mohammad Rabbani, 38, another veteran of the anti-Soviet resistance.

Other members include Mullah Mohammad Ghous, responsible for foreign affairs; Mullah Abdul Razzaq, in charge of the army; and security chief Mullah Mohammad Fazal.

Education is in the hands of Sayed Ghiasuddin Agha, the only Shura member who is not of ethnic Pashtun origin. The portfolio of Mullah Mohammad Hasan Akhund has not been announced.

Acting Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Sher

Mohammad Stanakzai said this week the interim council would be replaced by a new government to be discussed at a future gathering of Afghan personalities from inside and outside the country, once the military situation has stabilized.

He said all ethnic groups — Hazaras, Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks and others — would be represented in the assembly, which would decide on a future government for Afghanistan to be run on strictly Islamic lines.

"The Islamic government has a role for everyone," interim Shura leader Rabbani told reporters, adding that former King Zahir Shah, now in exile in Rome, would be welcome to return to Afghanistan to "serve his nation."

On Tuesday, Mr. Omar named another 17 men to senior posts in the fledgling military and civilian administration.

They included Mullah Abdul Salam Rocketti, named for his skill at firing U.S.-supplied stinger anti-aircraft missiles while fighting for the Ittehad-e-Islami guerrilla faction dur-

ing the anti-Soviet struggle.

Mr. Rocketti, appointed deputy army corps chief, is also known for his kidnapping of a group of Chinese engineers and Pakistani military men from Pakistan's southwestern province of Baluchistan in 1993. The kidnapping was a bid to force Islamabad to release his detained brother and return a cache of Stinger missiles and money seized by the Pakistani security forces.

The Taliban, hungry for recognition by the United States, said last week they opposed international terrorism and would punish any perpetrators who fell into their hands.

They have promised to try criminals and unrepentant political opponents in Islamic Sharia courts and mete out Islamic punishments, including death for murder, amputation for theft and stoning to death for adultery.

"Now there will be an Islamic army and an Islamic life and you will see the change," said Mr. Rabbani hours after the Taliban rolled into Kabul.

German court confirms FIS leader's status

DUESSELDORF (R) — A German court said on Friday it had allowed Algerian Muslim fundamentalist leader Rabah Kebir to stay in Germany, rejecting a legal challenge to his status as a political refugee.

The high administrative court in the northern city of Muenster dismissed a second attempt by the federal ombudsman for asylum affairs to strip Mr. Kebir, leader-in-exile of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), and his family of their refugee status. Friday's ruling confirmed a previous decision by a lower administrative court in Aachen in January.

"The decision of the Aachen court that Rabah Kebir should be granted asylum status cannot be challenged," Bernd Wotmann, a spokesman for the Muenster court, said. "The decision is binding by law and can no longer be challenged."

Neither Mr. Kebir nor a spokesman for the ombudsman's office were immediately available for comment.

Mr. Kebir fled to Germany and applied for political asylum in 1992. The following year he and a number of other men were sentenced to death in their absence after a trial in May 1993 on charges linked to armed insurrection, including a bomb attack at Algiers airport that killed nine people and wounded 124. The FIS took up arms against army-backed Algerian authorities in 1992 after multi-party elections it seemed poised to win were annulled. Some 50,000 people are estimated to have died in the fighting.

Analysts say it is unclear whether the group's political leaders still control militant guerrillas.

Controversy surrounds Erbakan visit to Libya

TRIPOLI (AP) — On another controversial mission, Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan was making his first official visit to this outpost state Friday with hopes even his own government's officials call unrealistic.

Mr. Erbakan, on a mission to fulfill his campaign promise of improving ties with the Muslim World, would not budge from his plans to visit Libya despite severe criticism from within his own cabinet and Turkey's closest ally, the United States.

Libya has been largely isolated since the U.N. Security Council imposed an air travel ban and other sanctions on Tripoli in 1992. The move was aimed at forcing Libya to turn over two suspects in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, which killed 270 people.

In August, President Bill Clinton signed into law U.S. sanctions against firms investing in Libya and Iran, which he called terrorist states.

Mr. Erbakan visited Tehran two weeks after the U.S. law

was put into effect and signed a \$23 billion deal to buy natural gas from Iran. Although he argued the deal did not violate the new U.S. sanctions, the symbolism of the event was sufficient to anger the United States.

The Libyan trip, Mr. Erbakan's second overseas venture since coming to power in a coalition in June, comes only two months later.

Despite recent calls by Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi on world leaders to ignore the flight ban and fly directly to Tripoli during their

visits, Mr. Erbakan was flying to the Tunisian city of Djerba near the Libyan border and was to drive into Libya.

Respect for the niceties of the sanctions aside, the trip already has drawn strong American objections.

"Libya is a pariah state and ought to be treated like a pariah state," said U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns last week.

"So when other countries, especially friends of the United States like Turkey, consider normalizing (ties with) Libya, of course we have

some concerns."

Besides the symbolic aim of having efforts to build stronger ties with all Muslim countries — his first trip included three Muslim nations other than Iran — Mr. Erbakan's main goal is to collect \$320 million the Libyan government owns Turkish contractors from past years.

But Turkey's energy minister, who already has held two days of talks with Libyan officials in Tripoli, had little hope to offer.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:05Cartoon — Moomin
15:30UEFA Football Match
17:00News Flash
17:02Sciences Classon
17:15La Vie Devant Moi
17:30 Game Show — Les Bons Genies
18:00Police des Polices
19:00Le Journal
19:15 Magazine — Faut Pas Rever
19:30News Headlines
19:35 Comedy — Baker's Field
20:00The Album Show
20:45Drama — Miami Vice
21:30Prism
22:00News in English
22:25 The Bold and the Beautiful
23:15Feature Film

PRAYER TIMES

04:11Fajr
05:28(Sunrise) Duha
11:24Dhuhr
14:46Asr
17:21Maghreb
18:38Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661656.
Terrasanta Church Tel.
622366
Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 623541

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Anglican Church Tel. 652826.

Armenian Catholic Church
Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church
Tel. 775261.

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771751.

Amman International Church
Tel. 827126

Evangelical Lutheran Church
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German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel.
654932.

Church of Nazarene Tel.
675691.

The Evangelical Local Church
in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel.
614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department
of Meteorology.

Temperatures are expected to rise
becoming slightly above average
with winds northeasterly to
northwesterly moderate. In
Aqaba, winds will be northerly
moderate to active and seas calm.
Min./Max. temp.

Amman16/31
Aqaba24/35
Deserts15/34
Jordan Valley22/35

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 31, Aqaba 32 Humidity
readings: Amman 25 per cent.

Aqaba 45 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Wissam Hazyayn748563

Dr. Munther Al Qaraini779959

Dr. Mukhlis Mazharah820425

Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyem630115

Firas pharmacy661912

Al Asema pharmacy637055

Nairoukh pharmacy623672

Al Salam pharmacy636730

Yacoub pharmacy644945

Shmeisani pharmacy637660

Najib pharmacy847632

IRBID:

Dr. Ghazi Ta'anneh250080

Al Quds pharmacy(—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Ziyad Jhahtim992991

Khalifah pharmacy985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre637111

Civil Defence Department661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue630341

Civil Defence Emergency199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 657777

Public Security Department

630321

Hotel Complaints605800

Price Complaints661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints897467

Amman Municipality Complaints787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance)121

Overseas Calls010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs661101

Jordan Television773111

Radio Jordan774111

Water Authority680100

Jordan Electricity Authority815615

Electric Power Company636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alla Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussain Medical Centre813813/32

Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn644281/6

Akileh Maternity, J. Amn642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity642362

Malhas, J. Amman636140

Palestine, Shmeisani607071

Shmeisani Hospital669131

University Hospital845845

Al-Muasher Hospital, 667227/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen777101/3

Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh775111/26

Army, Marka891611/15

Queen Alla Hospital 602240/50

Amal Hospital674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital(09)83323

Zarqa National Hospital(09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital(09)86732

Al Hikam Modern Hospital(09)909090

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital(02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital(02)272275

Ibn Al Nafies Hospital(02)247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital(03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

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Royal Jordanian (RJ) information

department at the Queen Alia

International Airport Tel.

(08)53200 where it should always be verified. Information

on other flights is obtained on telephone (08) 53700 or (08) 532350.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

05:35Beirut (RJ)

06:30Aqaba (add) (RJ)

10:35Aqaba, Paris (RJ)

10:50Bangkok (add) (RJ)

11:00Vienna (RJ)

11:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)

German court confirms FIS leader's status

Home News



HRH Princess Basma admires a display of traditional silver handicrafts at the annual Um Al Hussein Charity Bazaar in support of the Um Al Hussein Orphanage. To her right stands Maher Naqvi, wife of the Pakistani ambassador to Jordan, and to the far right Bazaar Organiser Mureille Abu Jaber (Petra photo)

Annual orphanage bazaar includes 42 embassies

AMMAN (J.T.) — HRH Princess Basma Thursday opened the charity bazaar of Um Al Hussein Orphanage (Mabarrat Um Al Hussein), organised by diplomatic missions in the Kingdom.

The Princess, in remarks at the opening ceremony, said that the bazaar is in commemoration of Her Majesty the late Queen Zein Al Sharaf who sponsored the Um Al Hussein Orphanage, established in 1951.

She said the bazaar contributes to the orphanage's programmes and projects and thanked the embassies who took part in this year's

bazaar for their continuous support and cooperation in showcasing this event.

Bazaar Coordinator, Mureille Abu Jaber, thanked HRH Princess Basma for her patronage of the bazaar, held annually for the last 30 years. She said the bazaar provides a considerable contribution for Mabarrat Um Al Hussein.

A total of 42 foreign embassies took part in the bazaar in which were displayed traditional, authentic items and products from their home countries, including embroideries, handicrafts, clothes, wood-carvings, ceramics and sil-

ver handmade products.

The bazaar also houses a section for international food products and traditional dishes from various countries.

Um Al Hussein Orphanage presently shelters 145 orphans aged 6 to 18, and provides them with services, including education, accommodation, food, and clothes as well as health care and recreational facilities.

HRH Princess Basma is following in the footsteps of the late Queen Mother and is now supervising the activities and programmes of the orphanage.

Population dynamics to be discussed in seminar

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) will organise a first meeting for Heads of National Population Councils in the Arab World on October 9, at the Amra Hotel, according to a ministry statement.

The meeting will be held under the patronage of Minister of Labour Abdul Hafez Shakhanbeh and preceded by a regional "Expert Group Meeting" titled "Population Dynamics and Sustainable Development in the Arab World: Inter-relationships and Impacts" from October 6 to 8.

The statement said that

the two meetings are part of a project entitled "Population Policies for Arab Countries in the ESCWA Region and North Africa," implemented by the ESCWA with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); they aim to support national population councils and commissions in drafting, implementing and analysing national policies.

According to the statement, the groups will discuss the importance of population policies for sustainable development as well as analysing the components of such policies and their relationship

to development with the results of the meeting being submitted to the those heading national population councils.

The aim of the meeting is to improve the ability of Arab national population councils to prepare and develop comprehensive development policies as well as providing practical alternatives to methods of implementation, follow-up and assessment of current population policies.

Various regional and international experts will participate in the two meetings, the statement concluded.

Journalist surrenders; expected to face lese majeste charges

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Journalist Nahed Hattar, on the run since late August, has surrendered himself to the authorities and is expected to appear at the State Security Court on Saturday to face charges of lese majeste along with fellow journalist Abdullah Abu Roumman.

The surrender of Mr. Hattar, who continued his writings for the Shihan weekly tabloid while in hiding, came after indications that he could be tried in absentia along with Mr. Abu Roumman, who was detained late August.

Sources confirmed accounts in the local press that Mr. Hattar turned himself in to the authorities on Thursday in the presence of legal counsel Faisal Bataineh.

The defence team is expected to include Ahmad Obeidat, Sultan

Hattar, Zeid Radiach and Hassan Momani as well as Mr. Bataineh.

Prosecutor Ahmad Horan Harahsheh is in charge of the prosecution team.

Deputy Khalil Haddadin (Amman) was also present when Mr. Hattar surrendered to the authorities, the daily Al Dustour reported.

Mr. Hattar and Abu Roumman will be charged with "distributing articles that insulted the dignity of His Majesty the King."

If convicted, the two could be sentenced to jail from one week to three years under article 195 of the penal code.

Mr. Hattar went into hiding in the third week of August after a warrant was issued for his arrest as well as that of Mr. Abu Roumman, who was apprehended immediately.

Police raided an office that the two maintained in Jabal Luweibdeh before

the planned launch of a weekly they called Al Mithaq and seized manuscripts which are expected to serve as the main evidence for the specified charges against the two.

The seized writings criticised the authorities for their decision to increase bread prices and rechannel subsidies in the form of direct cash compensation to Jordanians.

No details were immediately available as to the precise nature of the contents of the articles which are deemed to have insulted His Majesty the King.

Writing in Shihan from his clandestine locale, Mr. Hattar said three weeks ago that he was willing to surrender to the authorities in return for guarantees that he would not be "tortured" in detention.

The government has repeatedly denied that detainees were tortured.

According to sources, Mr. Hattar apparently was

hiding in a hospital, disguising himself as a patient. This could not be independently confirmed.

Local tabloids' coverage of the Aug. 16-17 riots in the south have led to a series of cases against journalists, most of them involving alleged violations of the Press and Publications Law. Others are related to charges of direct involvement in inciting the unrest and violent rampages against public and private property.

Four journalists from Al Bilad Weekly face charges of violating the Press and Publications Law. The weekly is accused of carrying "unfounded and inaccurate reports that instigate public passion." They will be tried by a special court that deals with violations of the press law, scheduled to convene Oct. 3.

Reporter Fuad Hussein of Al Aswaq, who remains in detention, faces charges

of instigating sedition. It is not known when Mr. Hussein, who was arrested on Aug. 19, will be tried.

Mr. Hussein, known to be a pro-Iraq Baath party activist, is a member of the executive council of the Jordan Press Association, and head of its Freedoms Committee.

Osama Rantissi, chief editor of Al Ahali, faces charges of violating the Press and Publications Law. Al Ahali is the mouthpiece of the Jordan People's Democratic Party. Several members of the party are among those expected to go on trial on charges of instigating or direct involvement in the southern riots.

Officials declined comment on the case, saying it was to the prosecutors and the courts to rule when formal charges were pressed.

Minister inaugurates 4.2-kilometre pipeline

DEIR ALLA (J.T.) — Water and Irrigation Minister Samir Kavar this week inaugurated a pipeline from the district of Al Huwarat to that of Abul Zighan.

The project is designed to improve the quality of water used for irrigation in the Central Jordan Valley region.

The 4.2-kilometre pipeline draws from the King Talal Dam and runs between the Huwarat and Abul Zighan reservoirs preventing irrigation water from mixing with the salt-water of artesian wells located between the two dams.

Mr. Kavar said that the project is directed to improving the water which irrigates 50,000 dunums of valley land south of the Zarqa River.

The project was completed in 100 days and cost JD 3,088 million with an additional JD180,000 for supervision costs, engineering services and the construc-



Samir Kavar

tion of iron gates to control water flow.

According to the minister, the project was deemed necessary as in the past three years salt water was discovered leaking from local artesian wells and mixing with the King Talal Dam's fresh water.

The salinity rate of the water was mixing with the irrigation water at the rate of 25 cubic metres per second but recently escalated

to 45 cubic metres per second, making the water unfit for local irrigation.

Mr. Kavar also announced to members of the local press that during October his ministry will announce a tender for the construction of a major dam on the Yarmouk River which will enable Jordan to store and use an annual 50 million cubic metres of water.

He said that finishing touches to the dam's designs and tender documents will be implemented in 16 months.

Referring to water to be supplied from Israel in implementation of the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty provisions, the minister said that Jordan was involved in negotiations with the Israeli government on locating adequate water resources.

The Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development financed the project in conjunction with the State Treasury.

International book fair opens Monday

AMMAN (Petra) — A total of 203 international publishing houses will Monday participate in a book exhibition under the patronage of HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent.

A statement issued Friday from the Ministry of Culture stated that the 10-day exhibition which will be held at the International Exhibition Centre on University Road will include a special wing for the publications of Egyptian writer and literary critic Ihsan Abbas.

The ministry is organising a special seminar, in conjunction with the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation and the Arab Federation of Publishers and the Jordanian Publishers Union (JPU), to be included in the exhibition, on intellectual property rights in the Arab World.

JPU's president Fathi Biss said that the exhibition, the sixth of its kind in Jordan, is aimed at the promotion of reading in Jordan and the Arab World.

After 1989, according to Mr. Biss, the cost of printing

books rose sharply due to the devaluation of the Jordanian dinar as well as a general increase in the cost of publishing in world markets.

The JPU calls on publishers and distributors to forego a margin of profit as a contribution towards encouraging the purchase of books, he said, continuing that the JPU is also determined to assist authorities in combating any attempts on encroachment of intellectual property rights and copyrights, said Mr. Biss.

Referring to the current increases in the prices of university textbooks, Mr. Biss said that certain university teachers have been importing textbooks and monopolising sales to students, thus causing increases in book prices.

He said that teachers should not be allowed to simultaneously act as authors and distributors and that the practice of selling books should be left to the publishing houses who can ensure reasonable prices.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

* German film "Rauliens Revier" (with subtitles in English) at Goethe-Institut at 8:00 p.m.

CONCERT

* Performance by Al Hannunah Band at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* "Coloured Silence" exhibition by Samira Abdul Wahab at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens street (Tel 687598), until Oct. 15.

* Works by Ghada Dahdaleh at the French Cultural Centre, until Oct. 29.

* "The Fifth One-Dimension Exhibition" by several artists at Ab'ad Art Gallery, Mecca Street (Tel. 862105), until Oct. 10.

* Basketry exhibition (with a variety of wrought iron furniture mixed with basketry) at Jordan Design and Trade Centre, Shmeisani (Tel. 699141/2), until Oct. 10.

* "Summer '96" exhibition at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh (including ceramic sculptures by Vera Tammari, photographs of Jordanian villages by Ammar Khammash, works by contemporary Arab artists, a mosaic exhibition, and others), until Oct. 8.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Blaze put out at paint factory

AMMAN (J.T.) — Fire brigades from the Civil Defence Department Thursday extinguished a fire which engulfed the paint production line of the National Paints factory, located in Abu Alanda. The teams worked for 90 minutes to prevent its spread to other factory sections, including a gas station containing 150 tonnes of stored gas. There were no casualties, according to a report in the Arabic daily Al Rai, however several factory workers were hospitalised for smoke inhalation and burns. The fire resulted in financial losses of an undisclosed amount. A total of 25 civil defence fire trucks, water tankers and ambulances worked jointly to put out the blaze. Upon notification of the conflagration, Interior Minister Awad Khleifat, Public Security Director General Nasouh Muhieddin, and Civil Defence Director Major General Theeb Mas'ni arrived at the scene to oversee fire fighting efforts. Dr. Khleifat called for the formation of a special committee to investigate possible origins of the fire.

Programme to train worker skills

AMMAN (Petra) — The Public Administration Institute today will hold three training programmes in the fields of higher administration, personnel administration and analysis of financial resources. The programmes aim to train workers in such fields to develop their personal and technical skills.

Man caught pilfering state aid

AMMAN (Petra) — A man conceded JD448 to the National Aid Fund (NAF) which he had illicitly received as cash assistance over a period of 14 months, according to Minister of Social Development Hammad Abu Jamous. In a statement to Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Abu Jamous, who heads the NAF's Board of Directors, said the millionaire was registered as a hardship case and was receiving JD32 monthly as a cash payment. An investigation revealed that the citizen's financial position was solid and that he did not qualify for the aid. The minister said authorities were investigating as to how he managed to qualify himself for the cash assistance.



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Clinton stumps in New York state; starts debate preparations

BUFFALO, New York (R) — Back on the campaign trail after an inconclusive flurry of Middle East diplomacy, President Bill Clinton wooed voters in New York State Thursday and began training for the first presidential debate.

At an airport rally attended by several thousand cheering supporters, Mr. Clinton previewed the themes he was expected to emphasize in his showdown with Republican challenger Bob Dole during Sunday Night's debate.

Mr. Clinton said that when he ran for president in 1992 "we were drifting toward the 21st century" and "four years later, we're on the right track roaring toward the 21st century."

"Compared to four years ago, there's a lot of good news. Ten and a half million

new jobs. Average family income is up \$1,600 after inflation since we passed the economic plan that our opponents said would drive the country into the ditch," he said.

The Democratic standard bearer was, in a sense, encroaching on enemy turf. Jack Kemp, Sen. Dole's vice-presidential running mate, represented the Buffalo area in Congress for more than a decade.

Saluting high school bands that turned out to greet him, Mr. Clinton joked about the frigid weather the region is famous for — it was in the low 40s for his arrival. "The colder it is, the harder it is to play one of those instruments — I know," the former saxophone player said.

"But in Buffalo, this is a heat wave, right?" Mr.

Clinton said.

Mr. Clinton mentioned his emergency summit with His Majesty King Hussein. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat only in passing. But White House spokesman Mike McCurry rejected Republican criticism of the summit's failure to produce concrete results.

Mr. McCurry defied Sen. Dole and Republican House Speaker Newt Gingrich to identify "any other course of action than the president saw" for preventing collapse of the Middle East peace process.

After the rally, Mr. Clinton flew by helicopter to the renowned Chautauqua Institution, a gated Victorian village founded more than a century ago as a vacation retreat for Methodist Sunday school teachers.

It is his training camp for the televised campaign debate that will occur in Hartford, Connecticut, at 9 p.m. EDT Sunday (0100 GMT Monday).

The institution is located 60 miles southwest of Buffalo on a wooded 750-acre campus adjoining scenic Lake Chautauqua.

Aides said Mr. Clinton's preparations for his showdown with Mr. Dole would include a series of full-scale mock debates in which former Senate Democratic leader George Mitchell will impersonate Sen. Dole.

They said Mr. Clinton would also study briefing books and spend some time relaxing, perhaps with jogging and golf.

Campaign spokesman Joe Lockhart told reporters Mr. Clinton, who is famed for his oratorical skills, was "slightly apprehensive at this point" because Sen. Dole has been prepping for the debate while he was trying to end the violence between Israelis and Palestinians that erupted last week.

Mr. McCurry also jumped into the pre-debate political spin game, telling reporters that Mr. Clinton "feels like he has not had the time he has allotted and planned to prepare for the debates."

Sunday's debate between Mr. Clinton and Sen. Dole will be followed by a vice-presidential showdown between Mr. Kemp and Al Gore Wednesday night, and a second Clinton-Dole debate Wednesday, Oct. 16.

Mr. Clinton enters the rhetorical fray in a strong position politically. With less than five weeks to go before the Nov. 5 election, he leads his rival by 10 to 15 percentage points or more in national opinion polls.



President Bill Clinton waves a Buffalo Bills jersey over his head at the Chautauqua Institution to prepare for his Oct. 6 televised presidential debate with Republican opponent Bob Dole (Reuter photo)

Japan refuses to recognise lighthouse in islands dispute

TOKYO (R) — Japan, seeking to ease tensions with China and Taiwan over disputed islands in the East China Sea, said Friday it would not recognise a lighthouse built on one of the islands by a right-wing group.

But Tokyo said the decision to deny recognition of the structure built by the Japan Youth Federation did not alter Japan's claim of sovereignty to the uninhabited islands, known as the Senkaku Islands in Japanese and as the Diaoyu in Chinese.

Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda announced the decision at a news conference, citing a concern for international relations, as Taiwanese negotiators held talks in Tokyo with Japanese officials over issues relating to the islands.

On Friday, Taiwanese negotiators and Japanese counterparts failed to reach any agreement over fishing rights and other issues stemming from the sovereignty row over the islands.

"These are issues that can never be resolved overnight, and no agreement has been reached," Chuang Ming-Yao, head of Taiwan's representative office in Tokyo, told reporters.

No date has been set for another round of talks to resolve the long-dormant sovereignty dispute, which

was ignited in July when the Japan Youth Federation, a Tokyo-based rightist group, erected the makeshift lighthouse in one of the islands.

The move sparked anti-Japanese protests in Hong Kong, China, Taiwan and Macau.

"We made the decision in light of the overall situation including international relations," Ikeda said.

"The decision does not affect Japan's ownership of the Senkaku Islands," he added.

Chinese Premier Li Peng said this week the Japanese rightists had undermined Sino-Japanese relations by building and repairing the lighthouse.

The right-wing group had applied to Japan's Maritime Safety Agency in September for formal recognition of the aluminium lighthouse as a legitimate one.

The rightists have argued that they built the lighthouse to help ensure the safety of ships sailing in the East China Sea.

Officials from the right-wing group were not immediately available to comment on Tokyo's decision.

China and Taiwan, which separately challenge Japan's claim to the islands, have condemned the construction of the lighthouse and demanded its immediate removal.

Tensions have grown in the last two months, during which time Japanese patrol boats have repelled private Taiwanese boats attempting to take protesters, fishermen and journalists to the islands, triggering calls for a more forceful response from Beijing and Taipei.

The dispute escalated on Sept. 26 with the death of a Hong Kong activist, David Chan, who drowned after jumping off a protest ship near the islands, with Tokyo coming under growing pressure to defuse the row.

Tokyo's claim dates to 1895, when Japan defeated China and seized Taiwan and other territories. China has claimed sovereignty over the islands for centuries. Japan says that as far as it is concerned the issue is not open for discussion.

Taiwan also claims ownership of the islands, saying they are under the jurisdiction of its northeastern county of Ilan.

Taiwan has no diplomatic ties with Japan, which recognises only Beijing's Communist government.

Japan was given control of the islands in 1972. But the U.S. government at the time said any outstanding territorial issue should be settled among the countries concerned.

Russia test fires Cruise missiles

MOSCOW (R) — Russia fired four Cruise missiles Thursday as part of routine tests of its nuclear defences, Russian news agencies reported.

ITAR-TASS and Interfax quoted a spokesman for the Strategic Missile Forces as saying an RS-12m Topol (Poplar) intercontinental ballistic missile was successfully launched from the Plesetsk test site in the far north. It hit its target, whose location was not made known.

Interfax separately quoted a source on the staff of the Northern Fleet in the Arctic port of Murmansk as saying that a sea-launched test warhead successfully struck a target on the Kamchatka peninsula in the Russian Far East.

An air force official at Engels, in southern Russia, said the Strategic Air Command had launched two Cruise missiles. TASS said in a separate report. These missiles also hit their targets but no further details were given.

TASS said the air force tests were part of a military staff exercise. Redoubt-96, which has been conducted since March.



Polish poet Wislawa Szymborska thanks members of the Polish Pen Club after receiving a Pen Club Award on Sept. 30. Ms. Szymborska won the 1996 Nobel Literature Prize, the Swedish Academy announced Thursday (Reuter photo)

Shy Polish poet wins 1996 Nobel Literature Prize

STOCKHOLM (R) — Shy Polish poet Wislawa Szymborska — described as the Mozart of poetry — won the 1996 Nobel Literature Prize Thursday, thrusting the timid Krakow writer into a world limelight she would rather avoid.

The Swedish Academy said it had honoured Ms. Szymborska, 73, for "poetry that with ironic precision allows the historical and biological context to come to light in fragments of human reality."

The award surprised observers, who had expected a novelist to win the \$1.12 million award after Irish poet Seamus Heaney won last year's prize.

Ms. Szymborska, tracked down to a hotel for writers in the Polish mountain resort of Zakopane, said she was delighted but also apprehensive at the prospect of worldwide fame.

"This is a difficult situation. I am normally a very private person and now I foresee some difficult moments," Ms. Szymborska, laughing with excitement, told Reuters by telephone.

"I am very pleased for Polish literature although there are other poets like me in Poland," she said.

The academy of Swedish literary heavyweights that awards the annual prize said her handful of slim volumes of poetry were very difficult to translate because of their stylistic variety.

"Since 1957... she has published a handful of slim but powerful collections of poems, a few volumes of book reviews and a number of highly esteemed translations of earlier French poetry," the academy said.

"She has been described as the Mozart of poetry, not without justice in view of her wealth of inspiration and the veritable ease with which her words seem to fall into place."

Clare Cavanagh, who has translated the poet into English, said: "She turns out under this modest and witty surface to be a very great poet. She's got this very light, witty touch."

"She's a very exceptional combination. She's a great philosopher on one hand but on the other hand has mass appeal in Poland," Ms. Cavanagh told Reuters from the University of Wisconsin in Madison, where she teaches.

"With her distance and commitment, Ms. Szymborska accords full support to her idea that no questions are of such significance as those that are naive," the academy said.

From 1953 to 1981, Ms. Szymborska was on the staff of the Polish intellectual magazine Zycie Literackie (Literary Life).

The academy said a typical example of her writing could be found at the end of a poem called The Joy Of Writing.

"The joy of writing. The revenge of a mortal hand." Her poems have been translated into English under the title View With A Grain Of Sand. Poems range from Calling Out To Yeti (1957) to The End And The Beginning (1993).

Asked whether she would now appear more in public and perhaps give lectures, the slight, grey-haired poet said she might travel but commented: "No, I never give lectures."

Ms. Szymborska is the fifth Pole or Polish-born writer to win the literature prize since it was first awarded to Frenchman Sully Prudhomme in 1901.

Henryk Sienkiewicz won it in 1905, the sixth winner of the prize bequeathed by dynamite inventor Alfred Nobel, and Wladyslaw Reymont won in 1924 when he shared the prize with George Bernard Shaw, an Irish playwright who settled in England.

Polish-born Jewish novelist Isaac Bashevis Singer won the prize in 1978 and Czeslaw Milosz won in 1980. Both had become American citizens.

Ms. Cavanagh said: "On the surface at least it can seem that she's just this charming, whimsical, eccentric poet, but she's more than that."

Ms. Szymborska's publishers were popping champagne corks after the announcement. The award invariably thrusts obscure authors to the forefront of book store windows, guaranteeing many print runs and higher sales for author and publisher alike.

"We could not believe it at first. She was a candidate we put forward many times," Jacek Bochenski, the Polish Pen Club's deputy president, told Reuters, calling the news wonderful.

"Her poetry is profound, beautiful, full of humour, simple. It easily finds its way to the reader, it is universal."

The academy and Ms. Szymborska, acknowledged a debt of gratitude to the Swedish translator Anders Bodegard, who published a selection of her works in Swedish in 1989.

The academy said one stanza of a 1980 poem, Nothing Twice, "illuminates like a streak of lightning Szymborska's art."

"With smiles and kisses, we prefer to seek accord beneath our star, although we're different (we concur) just as two drops of water are."

On Friday, Poland's media and intellectual elite have paid a unanimous tribute to Ms. Szymborska who is little known outside her country but highly respected at home.

A day after her nomination, Poland's leading daily newspaper Gazeta Wyborcza headed its Friday edition Szymborska's art, displaying a large colour photograph of the 73-year old poet, one of her poems and a tribute by the paper's publisher, former dissident Adam Michnik.

"To you, first lady of Polish letters, this prize — oh how deserved — will bring only problems and worries. But for us, who love your poems, this is a moment of great joy," wrote Michnik.

Poetry has always been a privileged form of art in Poland, where it has managed throughout history to convey the often divided country's patriotic spirit and aspirations to national identity.

While for more than a century Russian, Prussian and Austrian troops trampled Polish soil, romantic poets such as Mickiewicz, Slowacki and Krasiński, ensured the continuity of a people and their culture.

Polish celebrities, from the celebrated emigre poet Czeslaw Milosz, himself winner of the 1980 Nobel Prize for Literature, to former President Lech Walesa, united in rendering homage to the distinguished poet who grew up in the southern city of Krakow.

Meanwhile, many Poles, including leading politicians, were brushing up on their knowledge of Ms. Szymborska's poems, all the while acclaiming the poet for her unexpected moment of glory.

Japanese princess visits Czech Republic

PRAGUE (AFP) — The daughter of Japanese Emperor Akihito, Princess Nori, arrived here Thursday night to begin a four-day visit to the Czech Republic. The princess was due to lunch Friday with Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus, who was in Japan in September on the first official visit there by a Czech leader since the Czech Republic came into existence in 1993 after the break-up of Czechoslovakia. Princess Nori will go Saturday to the spa town of Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad) 130 kilometres west of Prague. In the 19th century, the town was a popular resort of the European aristocracy. While there, Princess Nori will visit an orphanage. She will leave Prague Monday for London — the last leg of her 12-day European tour. Prior to the Czech Republic, the princess spent four days in Bulgaria where she talked with Bulgarian leaders and opened a Japanese cultural festival in Sofia. She was the third member of the Japanese imperial family to visit Bulgaria, after Emperor Akihito in 1979 when he was crown prince, and Prince Mikasa, brother of the late Emperor Hirohito, in 1987.

Fergie reveals bid to block revealing memoirs

LONDON (R) — Britain's Duchess of York has pulled out of an attempt to prevent publication of a book that threatened to reveal intimate details of her affair with her former "financial adviser," John Bryan. Her decision came just days before the case was due to be heard at London's High Court where the duchess, better known as Fergie, could have been called to give evidence in public about her private life. "The matter has been resolved. An agreement has been reached with her lawyers," a publishing industry source told Reuters. The ex-wife of Queen Elizabeth's second son, Prince Andrew, was seeking to block publication of Fergie's "Secret Life" by Alan Starker, a former friend of Mr. Bryan's. The book will now be published on Nov. 4. Her publishers said that Fergie, who was called on by the court to provide £500,000 (\$780,000) as security against losing the case, had decided not to go ahead after receiving assurances that the book would not contain any material damaging to the royal family. While still married to Prince Andrew, Fergie was photographed frolicking with Mr. Bryan, an American, in the south of France as her two young daughters looked on. An infamous picture of Mr. Bryan sucking the toe of the topless duchess was splashed across newspapers and magazines worldwide. It was a major embarrassment for the royal family as well as for Fergie herself, who has come under attack from the press almost since the day of her engagement for her appearance and her free spending ways.

Bottle of French claret sells for \$10,000

PARIS (R) — A 150-year-old bottle of French claret fetched 52,000 francs (\$10,000) at an auction in Paris, organisers said Thursday. Auctioneer Jacques Tajan said the Chateau-Lafite Rothschild wine bottled in 1846 in the Bordeaux region could be compared to any work of art. "Wine is made with a dream, art, faith, hope, courage, the thousand qualities that are those of artists," he said. The auction of 3,800 bottles, Wednesday night at the Eiffel Tower, grossed close to two million francs (\$400,000). It was intended to finance the refurbishing of the Museum of Franco-American Friendship in the French town of Blerancourt.

'The election campaign starts right now,' Prescott tells U.K. Labour

BLACKPOOL, England (AFP) — "The general election campaign starts right here, right now," deputy Labour Leader John Prescott Friday told the rousing wrap-up to a week-long congress aimed at giving the opposition party a big push toward spring elections it is heavily favored to win.

"The countdown starts here," said the tough-talking ex-union man who has been the perfect foil this week to party leader Tony Blair, the polished 43-year-old barrister who in two years has dragged Labour kicking and screaming into the political

mainstream.

In a week of rousing speeches and serious back-room horse-trading, Labour this week appeared to have succeeded in tightening ranks around Mr. Blair and cloaking itself in the look of a governing party that has alluded it for 17 years.

And it managed as well to finally shake off its nagging image as political wing of the big trade unions that created the party as their mouthpiece early in the century.

The conference, figured party campaign manager and press guru Peter Man-

derson, was an "across-the-board success."

For the second time in two years, the 1,250 delegates supported the leadership line on key issues and allowed Mr. Blair to beat back challenges from the party's left on the touchy issues of state pensions and retention of the Trident nuclear missile programme.

And they approved, 95 per cent to five, a party manifesto in what was seen as a massive endorsement for Mr. Blair's modernisation programme.

The document set out Labour's plans and pledges,

including promises to cut school class sizes, cut hospital waiting lists, get 250,000 Under-25s off welfare and into work, to get tough on crime and set tough rules for government spending.

And in a stark departure from tradition, the manifesto — effectively Labour's campaign platform — was to be sent out to every one of the party's 380,000 registered individual members for a "Yes" or a "No" sounding.

It was to be, said a party source. "The greatest exercise in party democracy in

political history."

A surprising phenomenon of this conference was the warmth with which the traditionally conservative press treated Mr. Blair's keynote address Tuesday, including the Times, but particularly The Sun, a tabloid.

The Sun's virulent anti-Labour campaign in the run-up to the 1992 elections had been credited with Labour's narrow loss. This year, The Sun instead marvelled at the revolutionary reforms Mr. Blair has pushed through since he succeeded the late John

Smith two years ago.

The only sour note for Labour here this week was the forced resignation Thursday night of a Labour front-bench spokeswoman in the House of Lords after her admission that she was on the board of a political lobby firm implicated in a Tory "cash-for-questions" scandal.

Although Labour leads the Conservatives by a solid 27 points in most polls, one of Mr. Blair's key tasks here this week was to stake out the critical middle electorate he needs to lock in the spring elections.

Some party traditionalists claimed he had done that too well, blurring the distinctions between Labour and the Conservatives.

For the vast majority here, however, the tone was echoed in Mr. Prescott's speech when he told the cheering, applauding delegates:

"We are united and ready to govern. This was the week when old and new came together and the Labour Party united. A new Labour government for Britain."

Japanese prime minister visits Czech Republic

PRAGUE (AP) — Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto arrived here Friday to begin a two-day visit to the Czech Republic. The prime minister is the first Japanese leader to visit the Czech Republic since its independence from the Soviet Union in 1989.

Seoul warns of Pyongyang strike

SEOUL (R) — South Korea's prime minister Friday warned that North Korea may strike against a group of isolated islands, and ordered security tightened at airports and diplomatic missions against possible terrorist attack.

In the first sign that escalating tension was eating into business confidence, jittery stock investors dumped shares and sent the market index plunging.

The atmosphere on the Korean peninsula, where two of the world's largest standing armies face each other, is worse than anytime since 1994 when Pyongyang threatened to turn Seoul into a "sea of fire" in a crisis over North Korea's suspected nuclear weapons programme.

That crisis was defused by a landmark agreement between Washington and Pyongyang in late 1994.

There is a possibility of incursion into the five northwest islands," Prime Minister Lee Soo-Sung said, referring to South Korean islands within sight of the North Korean mainland.

"We have decided to maintain the highest security vigilance on the islands," he told a meeting of security-related ministers to discuss Pyongyang's threats of retaliation for the deaths of North Korean soldiers who landed by submarine on Sept. 18.

The military would be placed on maximum vigilance along the demilitarized zone, a buffer that has split

the Korean peninsula since the 1950-53 Korean War ended in a ceasefire.

South Korea has long feared that North Korea may make a lunge for the islands, situated close to the 38th parallel that is roughly the line of division between North and South Korea.

The meeting decided to beef up protection of 395 key facilities, including airports, ports, communication centres and power plants, against possible North Korean terrorist attacks, a statement from Mr. Lee's office said.

Surveillance around 186 buildings of foreign diplomatic missions would be stepped up and protection of key South Korean figures boosted. Spot security checks would be made around subways, department stores and bus terminals.

Immigration inspection would be tightened against possible infiltration by terrorists, the statement said.

"We will enhance diplomatic activities with our allies, including the United States and neighbouring countries," Mr. Lee was quoted as saying.

Tension has mounted since North Korea warned of "serious consequences" over the submarine incident in a border meeting Wednesday with the U.S.-led United Nations Command, which monitors the Korean ceasefire.

It had previously threatened to retaliate "a hundred-fold or a thousand-fold" over the deaths of 22 soldiers who were among a group of 26 North Koreans put ashore on an east coast beach.

The search for the remaining three infiltrators was winding down in mountains around the east coast city of Kangnung. One infiltrator has been captured alive.

The brutal murder of a South Korean diplomat in the Russian Far East city of Vladivostok Tuesday has sparked fears that the North intended to make good on its threats.

However, on Thursday the Russian ITAR-TASS news agency quoted a diplomat at the North Korean embassy in Moscow saying reports Pyongyang was behind the killing were "nonsense."

The northwest islands are seen as particularly vulnerable since they are closer to North Korea than the South.

The leading stock market indicator plunged 17.58 points, or 2.21 per cent, to 776.43 at the close.

Blue chips such as Samsung Electronics and state electricity monopoly KEPCO were hardest hit.

"There have been rising enquiries from foreign investors on country risk in Korea. They are expected to sit tight on the sidelines," said Sohn Young-Bock of Samsung Securities.

Leaders of the ruling and opposition parties announced they would hold an emergency meeting with President Kim Young-Sam Monday to discuss the crisis.

Lebed snubs new Defence Council

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Russia's controversial security chief Alexander Lebed ignored the first meeting of the Defence Council on Friday in a clear sign of dissatisfaction with the new grouping and his role within it.

"He is working on the documents signed yesterday," a Lebed spokesman said by telephone, referring to deals signed Thursday with separatist leaders of Chechnya.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin chaired the meeting on behalf of President Boris Yeltsin. Government ministers and army and security bosses all attended.

Russian news agencies said the meeting, held behind closed doors, discussed funding for the armed forces as an issue over which Gen. Lebed campaigned publicly over the last few weeks.

Last month Gen. Lebed, in his capacity as the secretary of the Security Council, wrote a strongly-worded letter to Mr. Chernomyrdin saying the 1997 budget should be revised to grant more money to the army to salvage it from collapse.

He warned, in a newspaper interview, that delays in payments to servicemen could lead to mutiny.

But Interfax News Agency said there were serious differences of opinion at Friday's meeting.

The military complained bitterly that lack of money was undermining Russia's military capabilities. "A

real danger has emerged of damaging the military and technical ability which had been achieved through colossal effort," Interfax said.

Government representatives said the army was too big, with too many generals and too much bureaucracy.

"Participants reached the conclusion that serious reorganisation of the armed forces was needed which would take into consideration both the military and political state of the country and real economic conditions," Interfax said.

Mr. Yeltsin, in hospital preparing for heart surgery, in June appointed Mr. Lebed as his security adviser and secretary of the Security Council which groups top security and state officials.

The move followed Gen. Lebed's strong showing in the first round of the presidential election and aimed to boost Mr. Yeltsin's chances of winning the July 3 runoff.

But, in a clear sign that he was trying to curb Gen. Lebed's strive for power, Mr. Yeltsin set up the Defence Council in late July, making Gen. Lebed an ordinary member of the new body.

The president chairs the Defence Council. Mr. Chernomyrdin is his deputy and Yuri Baturin, formerly Mr. Yeltsin's security adviser, is its secretary.

On Thursday, Gen. Lebed threatened to resign during a meeting with Mr. Yeltsin in the Central Clinical Hospital over a presidential decision to remove him as

head of a committee on senior military appointments. Mr. Yeltsin gave the post to Mr. Baturin.

The president told Gen. Lebed to stay and urged him to work more closely with the government of Mr. Chernomyrdin, to whom he had delegated some of his own powers while he stays in hospital.

Mr. Chernomyrdin is constitutionally number two in Russia but Gen. Lebed has made little secret of presidential ambitions.

Burundi warns Hutu rebels as Washington envoy leaves

BUJUMBURA (R) — Burundi's army-backed president told Hutu rebels Thursday they cannot win the ethnic civil war and a U.S. envoy left saying a political settlement looked a long way off.

"(The rebels) cannot win. Especially where the civil war is also a kind of ethnic war. Peace can only come through negotiations," Major Pierre Buyoya told Reuters.

Maj. Buyoya was made president last July 25 when the mainly Tutsi army seized power, saying Burundi was sliding into anarchy after three years of ethnic violence in which 150,000 people are feared to have died.

Howard Wolpe, U.S. President Bill Clinton's special envoy for Burundi, left after four days of talks. He praised Maj. Buyoya's decisions to lift a ban on political parties and restore the National Assembly & added a sombre rider.

"Despite these steps, we are a long ways from seeing a just and durable political solution for Burundi," Mr. Wolpe said before leaving to tour regional capitals whose leaders clamped a total economic embargo on landlocked Burundi six days

after the coup.

Mr. Wolpe termed Maj. Buyoya "interim president." He did not mention ousted President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, a Hutu, who has lived in the U.S. ambassador's residence since two days before the coup.

He is the last prominent Hutu still in an embassy. The speaker of parliament, Leonce Ngendakumana, emerged from German diplomatic protection Wednesday.

He told a news conference Thursday the 81-member National Assembly will meet on Oct. 7. The mainstream Hutu party FRODEBU won 65 seats in 1993 elections but more than half their deputies are in exile or have been murdered.

Maj. Buyoya suspended the constitution and said his government would stay up to three years while a new political system was devised. Diplomats say this is a tall order and many believe the Tutsi elite will not share power with Hutus.

Regional leaders will review sanctions on Oct. 12 in Arusha, Tanzania.

Sri Lanka vows jungle war against rebels

COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lanka Friday announced plans for a jungle offensive against Tamil Tiger guerrillas who were dislodged from their final bastion and vowed to escalate military pressure on the rebels.

Energy Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte, who leads the government campaign against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), said the guerrillas have been defeated in the final town held by them in the country's north.

Gen. Ratwatte said the army's capture last week of the town of Kilinochchi left the LTTE without a population centre and has forced the Tigers to take to the jungles.

"This (war) will now develop into jungle warfare," said Gen. Ratwatte who is also the junior defence minister under President Chandrika Kumaratunga. "They (the Tigers) will go into the jungles and we will follow them."

The minister said plans were ready to mount a fresh onslaught against the Tigers but declined to give details.

The minister told reporters here that there were heavy casualties on both sides in the eight-day battle for Kilinochchi because the Tigers ferociously defended the town.

He cautioned that the guerrillas could regroup and stage spectacular attacks similar to the overrunning of the north-eastern military garrison of Mullaitivu in July if military pressure is eased.

"We will not allow that to happen again," Gen. Ratwatte said. "We intend to stay in Kilinochchi and

keep on attacking the Tigers to militarily finish them and start talking to the Tamil people about a political settlement."

The minister said they were also pressing ahead with a major rehabilitation programme to rebuild the battle-scarred northern region, including the peninsula of Jaffna which was taken from the Tigers last year.

The supply of building materials and food to the region was hampered because the only land route was still under Tiger control but the army would soon take action to wrest control over the highway, he said.

Opening the land route would require that security forces take control of a 70-kilometre stretch of road that passes through open terrain and thick forest.

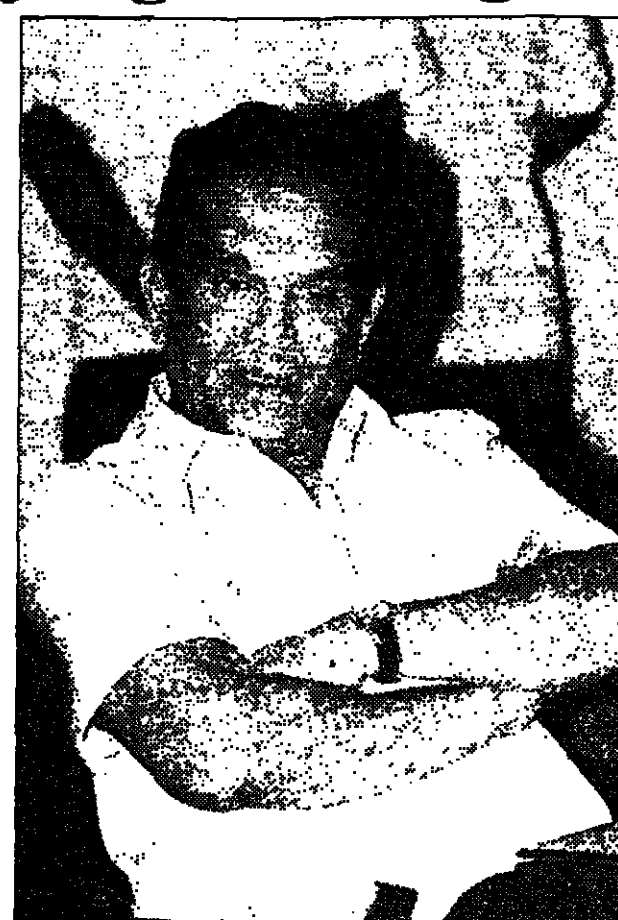
"Opening the land route to Jaffna is not a military requirement. It is a necessity for the rehabilitation work," said Gen. Ratwatte, a retired army lieutenant colonel who was promoted to general earlier this year.

Sri Lanka's army chief Rohan Daluwatte said the guerrillas' strength was down to about 3,000-4,000 cadres after a series of military offensives begun in October last year.

With the fall of Kilinochchi, the rebels no longer had the use of hospitals or a communication centre and tax base, Gen. Daluwatte said.

For their part, the Tigers have admitted losing Kilinochchi, and have announced they would shift their headquarters to jungles in northeastern Sri Lanka.

The Tigers have now located their political base



Sri Lanka's Deputy Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte gestures during a news conference held in Colombo Oct. 4. Gen. Ratwatte, whose troops captured a key northern Tamil rebel stronghold last week, said the military will continue its push to destroy the rebels (Reuters photo)

combatants.

However, a large number of villages in the island's north are still under rebel control.

The guerrilla group is leading a protracted campaign for independence in the island's northern and eastern regions where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated.

Gen. Ratwatte Friday ruled out unconditional talks with separatist Tamil Tiger rebels and said a de-commissioning of arms was essential to open peace negotiations.

He said the government was insisting that the LTTE surrender their weapons and agree to a time-frame to hammer out a settlement.

"They (the Tigers) must also recognise the fact that other Tamil parties must be included," Gen. Ratwatte said in response to media reports calling for third party mediation to end the conflict.

Gen. Ratwatte said the LTTE had used previous peace bids to re-group and re-arm to launch fresh attacks against security forces in the island's north-east.

"Many lives have been lost because they used the break in fighting to strengthen themselves," Gen. Ratwatte said. "We will not fall into trap once again. They must show they are sincere by lay down arms."

His remarks laid to rest speculation that the government may be amenable to unconditional talks through a third party mediator.

Britain and Australia have said they are willing to mediate only if they were asked by both sides.

The LTTE is known to operate its main military command and control centre in the Mullaitivu jungles even when the group used Jaffna as their political capital.

Tigers lost the town of Jaffna to security forces in December and later shifted further south to Kilinochchi which also fell last week after a ferocious battle that claimed the lives of 1,000

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Established 1975
محرران: جورج س. هواتميه، محمد محمود الكاظمي، محمد محمود الكاظمي، محمد محمود الكاظمي

Chairman of the Board of Directors:
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Editor-in-Chief:
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Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.
Telephones: 684311, 699634
Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO
Facsimile: 696183

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Failure, or move to peace?

THE ATTEMPT by President Bill Clinton to describe the outcome of this week's Washington summit as NOT a failure was gallant. But the fact remains that most people will have viewed the meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat that was hosted by President Clinton and attended by His Majesty King Hussein as a flop.

Public opinion, especially in the Arab World, wants to believe that one or two visible results were achieved by the summit. For instance, the agreement between the Israeli and Palestinian sides to meet again Sunday at the Erez crossing in a bid to launch an accelerated and non-stop negotiating process to settle all outstanding issues dividing the two sides beginning with Hebron. Additionally, the personal rapport that was struck between Arafat and Netanyahu that could be counted as a plus in the otherwise dark sea of mutual distrust and suspicions between the two leaders. But the truth is that Israel should have gone beyond the intransigence and at least recognised in public that it would do something to alleviate and lift some of the suffering and the hardships that the Palestinian people suffer from at the hands of the new Israeli government. Short of seeing that happen in Washington, there was no way for the Arabs to view the summit as successful.

The summit, in any case, has now been held and finished. The focus of attention now moves from the U.S. capital to the Erez crossing point, where Israel has committed itself to persevere in negotiations with the Palestinians till there is real progress and achievements towards peace. Thus, with the U.S. secretary of state or his representatives present at the Erez talks, the Palestinians may wish to take the Israeli side on their new commitment, particularly after the strong indication that Netanyahu gave, in his speech to the Israeli people Thursday, that neither side could win from continued violence and that the two peoples had everything to gain from working and attaining peace together.

The problem here is that we heard such promising talk from Netanyahu before (on at least two occasions, when he visited Cairo and Amman several weeks ago) only to discover later that his ideology and behaviour, as well as his party's inability to change its doctrinaire ways and to rid itself of the complexes that have stood in the way of advancing the cause of peace with the Palestinians (and the Syrians) eventually returned us to the days and rhetoric preceding the opening of the tunnel in Jerusalem. From a strictly political point of view, though, neither the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) nor the people it represents can afford to lose faith in the righteousness of their cause or walk the extra mile towards a just and equitable settlement with the Israeli people and state.

On the agenda of the security-related negotiations this week will be the action of the Palestinian police during the latest round of violence. The Israeli government has taken pains to depict the firing by Palestinian policemen on Israeli soldiers as the gravest of all violations. Israeli officials have repeatedly referred to the 15 Israelis who died by Palestinian gunfire but said nothing about the 70 Palestinians including children who were shot and killed by Israeli snipers. Furthermore, we all know that the Palestinian police's actions were basically defensive on evidence that its members did not enter or try to enter Israeli territory. What can anyone expect from the Palestinian police when they see their own people being shot at and slaughtered by the Israeli army, and what kind of human restraint can Israel anticipate from them when its soldiers respond to stone throwing by demonstrations with live ammunition?

It has been repeatedly said by the Arab side, and clearly the whole world, that the crux of the problem remains Netanyahu's vision for peace in the region, and not any particular action by the Palestinians. And as long as he clings to the notion that security can be attained without peace, there will always be unbridgeable gaps between his country and the Arab World. As President Clinton said in his concluding remarks at the end of the summit, there can never be security without peace. Hopefully Netanyahu and his government will heed those words which come from a friend and ally of theirs. Otherwise no amount of additional waiting or talking will get us near where we all want to be: a place called peace.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE PALESTINIANS have lost scores of martyrs and have hundreds of wounded as a result of the latest confrontations with the Israeli forces in their ongoing defence of their homeland and Islamic shrines, but most of the Arab Nation seems to be unaware of or failing to interact with these developments, said Sultan Al Hattab, a writer for Al Ra'i. For the Arabs, Jerusalem is the capital of the Arab country of Palestine and remains at the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and for Muslims around the world Jerusalem is a holy city, site of some of their most sacred sites, noted the writer. He added that while tens of thousands of Israelis demonstrate in Tel Aviv, demanding that their government comply with the requirements of the Oslo accords and make peace with the Palestinians, the Arab and Islamic worlds seem to be oblivious of the developments and not doing anything in support of their brothers who suffer from repression in Palestine.

Jordanian Perspective

Israeli rigid stand does not intimidate its neighbours

By Dr. Musa Keilani

THE ARAB-Israeli summit in Washington was a disappointment in that it could not produce anything more than a reaffirmation of the commitment by both Israel and the Palestinians to peace negotiations as the means to settle their conflict. That commitment was a known fact in the Middle East equation after the signing of the Oslo agreements and all subsequent accords. Did Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu need the White House roof to agree that he was committed to negotiating with the Palestinians? He was already doing the negotiations, so why did anyone need him to reiterate that?

We in Jordan and all other peace-loving people around the world were looking for concrete promises from the Israeli premier that he was committed to the agreements that his predecessors have reached with the Palestinians rather than the concept of future negotiations. These would have included an undertaking to carry out a prompt withdrawal from Hebron and not to unilaterally create facts on the ground to change the status of Arab East Jerusalem. On both counts, the Palestinians got nothing from Washington. And the Clinton administration, obviously more sensitive to electioneering than concerns over the fate of the Middle East peace process, treated Israel with kid gloves and let it be when it was time to apply a little bit of pressure.

Adding insult to injury was Mr. Netanyahu's decree that Israel would not close the controversial new entrance to the tunnel in Arab East Jerusalem. While one could consider the refusal as an attempt to not lose face among Israelis, Mr. Netanyahu's comments indicated clearly that the very existence of the tunnel was indeed a sign of Israel's attempt to enforce its sovereignty over Arab East Jerusalem. He equated the tunnel with the Jefferson Memorial and asked whether the U.S. administration would agree to close the Washington landmark, pressure or no pressure.

What does that tell us in real terms except that Israel has no intention whatsoever to let go of its grip on Arab East Jerusalem and that it would use everything in its power to thwart the Palestinians' quest to secure their legitimate rights to the Holy City?

Predetermining the outcome of the final status negotiations has always characterised Israel's approach to the agreements it has reached with the Palestinians. One has only to take a cursory look at the Israeli postures during the various phases of negotiations and issues to be convinced that the Palestinians will continue to remain captive to Israeli objectives throughout.

On the issue of settlements, instead of suspending all settlement activities and looking for alternatives to resettle the settlers in Israel proper, the Netanyahu government has given the green signal for expansion of the present settlements. The "security" guarantees that the Israeli government is demanding for the 450 or so settlers in Hebron speak volumes for Netanyahu's ultimate objective of retaining the settlements there while trying to pacify the Palestinians (Is it that difficult for the Israeli government to move 450 settlers from Hebron to somewhere else within the green line and defuse the situation in the West Bank town? We can understand but cannot accept the Israeli argument regarding the importance to Jews of the Ibrahimi Mosque. There are many places that are holy to the Jews, including in some countries in Europe. Would Israel even dare to speak of seeking control over those sites simply because they happen to be of some religious importance to the Jews?)

On the issue of refugees, Israel, even under the Labour government, has been ruling out the return of the Palestinians displaced in the 1967 war. What does that posture tell us in terms of the Palestinian hopes that the rights of the refugees of 1948 would be respected? On economic independence of the West Bank and Gaza, the agreements that Israel is forcing down the throats of the Palestinians indicate very clearly that the Jewish state wants to keep the territories as a captive market for itself and keep in check the natural economic growth of the Palestinians.

In sum, Israel is telling the Palestinians that it is stronger, politically, militarily and economically and, as such, the Palestinians had better accept Israeli-imposed conditions and shut up or else be left with nothing at all.

Where does that leave Jordan and other Arab countries

which are hoping, against hope, that the peace process would eventually produce a better Middle East region where security and stability will prevail on the basis of respect for the rights of all and mutual trust based on an acceptance of the reality that wars and conflicts do not solve anything?

It was the realisation of the danger to the peace process that prompted Jordan to accept the U.S. invitation to the Washington summit and play a key role there. By all accounts, Jordan's direct intervention as a party not only with key interests in the region but also a basic stake in the welfare of the region and its people was instrumental in creating a better environment for the Israelis and Palestinians to talk about the importance of dialogue and peace negotiations.

Let us accept it: Jordan cannot and will not assume any role on behalf of the Palestinians. The Palestinians themselves have to shoulder that responsibility. We in Jordan can only extend our total support for the Palestinians in their quest to regain their rights on their national soil and use our good offices wherever we can to back their struggle.

Behind the headlines of the Washington summit was the success of the Jordanian effort not to allow Israel to ignore its commitment to respecting the Kingdom's "special role" in the Islamic holy sites in Arab East Jerusalem as the Jewish state undertook in the Washington declaration and the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty. The success was not trumpeted if only because the key Jordanian focus in Washington was to get the peace process moving again.

But let Israel make no mistake. It cannot hope to benefit from Jordanian-Palestinian differences and advance its quest to impose its will on Arab East Jerusalem. Jordan is committed to respecting the Palestinian rights in Arab East Jerusalem and its differences with the Palestinians are a matter of approach rather than substance.

Netanyahu has not heard the last from Jordan in Washington. The Kingdom will continue to exert pressure on Israel wherever it can until the Jewish state moves ahead in concrete terms to honour and respect all its agreements with the Palestinians.

Netanyahu's defiance is bound to ruin the peace process

REVIEWED BY
ELIA NASRALLAH

THE DAILY newspapers last week focused their attention on the Arab-Israeli summit in Washington, the situation in the occupied Arab territories in the aftermath of the recent violent events and domestic issues.

In discussing the outcome of the latest events and their impact on the peace process, a writer for Al Ra'i daily said that the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had sustained a major loss and painted another ugly picture of Israel before the world.

The death of 14 Israeli soldiers, in confrontation with the Palestinians, has no doubt won him no friends among the Israelis, and his defiance of the world did not help to brighten the Jewish state's image in Europe and the world at large, said Fahed Fanek.

The writer said that as Mr. Netanyahu continues the process of building Jewish settlements, of demolishing Arab homes, and of disregarding the agreements concluded with the Palestinians, he is proving to the world that he is against peace.

The writer said that Mr. Netanyahu's opening of the tunnel under the Aqsa Mosque proves his determination to ruin the peace process, in flagrant defiance of the world community.

The Washington summit meeting's failure to deter Israel's illegal actions has dealt a severe blow to the peace process and this is exactly what Mr. Netanyahu was hoping for, said Taher Adwan, a writer for Al Dustour.

But the writer said that if Mr. Netanyahu succeeded in ruining the peace process and proved himself to be the number one enemy of peace, he will definitely not succeed in imposing his own idea of peace with the Arabs, which calls for peace in exchange of peace without giving back occupied Arab lands.

Having heard Netanyahu's clear position, the ball is now in the court of the Palestinians and the Arabs at large and one should expect a flurry of diplomatic activity in

the Arab World aimed at charting a common strategy for defence, said the writer.

In the face of continued Israeli moves to Judaise the holy shrines, the writer said, the Arab masses look to their leaders to take meaningful action aimed at uniting the Arab ranks and restoring collective efforts for the liberation of all the occupied lands in Palestine, Syria and Lebanon.

Ibrahim Absi, a writer for Al Ra'i daily, said that the Israeli prime minister is offering an empty hand to the Palestinians and asking them to accept its dictates in exchange for survival.

Of course Netanyahu is ruling out any collective action, meant to confront his policies, on the part of the Arab countries which are in total disarray, and he is pursuing his repressive policies at will, said the writer.

On the other hand, the Palestinians have nothing more to cede to the Israeli government except their own future, which the Israeli government wants to shape for them in a manner that would suit Israel's own interest, he noted. The writer said that is not satisfied with the demolition of Arab houses, the starvation of Arab children and the desecration of Arab holy shrines, but he is going ahead with humiliating measures to the Palestinian people and the Arab Nation.

By opening the tunnel under the Aqsa Mosque, Israel has violated its peace treaty with Jordan which has a special role in protecting the holy places, in accordance with that treaty, said Mohammad Subeishi, a writer for Al Dustour.

Jordan has not abandoned its sovereignty over the holy places in Jerusalem and this is a fact which was recognised by the former Israeli government which signed the treaty, said the writer who noted that the U.N. resolutions do not recognise Israel's annexation of Arab Jerusalem and demand an end to occupation.

The peace treaty, said the writer, does not give the Israelis the right to maintain their occupation of the eastern parts of Jerusalem and does not give Mr.

Netanyahu the right to make any changes in the features and the status of the holy shrines without Jordan's consent.

The writer said Jordan has repeatedly said that it adheres to its position with regard to the holy places until the Palestinians and the Israelis have reached a final settlement on the overall status of Jerusalem.

Sultan Al Hattab, a writer for Al Ra'i, said that the Palestinians and their leadership possess the means with which to confront the Israeli challenges and protect their rights. First of all, he said, all the political factions in Palestine, including Hamas and Islamic Jihad, are duty bound now to give their full backing to the Palestinian authority in its drive to ensure an end to occupation.

"The peace treaty does not give the Israelis the right to maintain their occupation of the eastern parts of Jerusalem and does not give Mr. Netanyahu the right to make any changes in the features and the status of the holy shrines without Jordan's consent."

At the same time, the Arab regimes and political groups of the Arab World should show their actual support for the Palestinians and their leadership and stop issuing statements of condemnation of Israel's actions and instead take practical measures to help their kinsmen. By showing unity and concerted action against Israel, the Arab World will secure the backing of the world community and does not

condone Israel's acts of aggression.

In light of the ongoing events, the Israelis must have realised that their prime minister is leading them towards catastrophe as he clearly seems to be ruining all chances of peace with the Arabs, said Hussein Abu Rumman, a writer for Al Ra'i.

By claiming to be for peace but actually working against it, Mr. Netanyahu has exposed his double-standard policies before the Israeli society and the world at large and his current escalation of tension with the Palestinians is bound to cause further violence and further loss of Israeli and Arab life, he said.

The writer said that peace in the Middle East is not a regional affair but concerns the world community at large and therefore the Arab countries have a duty to exercise pressure on the countries of the world, in general, and the United States, in particular, to take appropriate measures to end the Israeli extremist stand.

Hamadeh Faraneh, a writer for Al Dustour, reflected on the public institutions which continue to sustain losses and said that the government has a duty to uproot corruption in order to address the situation. The state-run universities have claimed they face a JD 90-million debt, the Jordan Water Authority JD 70 million, the Agricultural Credit Corporation JD 64 million, the Jordan Cooperative Organisation JD 13 million, and the Royal Jordanian JD 200 million, said the writer.

He said that the debts accumulated because of mismanagement, ill planning and procedures that continue to drain these institutions' resources. Despite being aware of some, or all, of the reasons behind this pitiable situation, the government continues to appoint new employees to work at the already bloated institutions, doing no meaningful work but adding to the national burden.

The writer said that the government should open the door to dedicated people in these institutions to address the situation and stop further slide towards

LETTERS

Short memory

To the Editor:

NO WONDER it had to take a genius like the prime minister of Israel to claim that the Palestinian defence police had no right to defend teenage Palestinian stone throwers.

The prime minister is suggesting that the Palestinian police force be called back to the barracks, allowing the Israeli army to kill more Palestinians for throwing stones. Maybe the Israeli government would like to issue a quota on how many Palestinian boys should be killed at the hands of the Israeli army before the Palestinian police should appear.

No person on earth is calling for violence or the death of any human being, but the right to self-defence and to exist in dignity is a basic right.

If young boys and men are committing crimes, then perhaps the Israelis should start to ponder on the reasons behind them, on the negative factors that are overwhelming the Palestinian lives: no future and bleak prospects of peace. Could it be that they throw stones at the Israelis because they have been prosecuted, jailed, degraded, tortured, frustrated, threatened and treated inhumanely at the hands of the Israeli army and government?

At one stage, the Israelis perfected the art of ridiculing "self-defence" by the Palestinians, making the act sound uncivilised and making it unnatural for a nation to defend itself against settlers and their weapons.

Not many people have forgotten the TV pictures of Israeli soldiers tying up and breaking the bones of Palestinian youth with large stones because they defied Israel's unjust occupation and land confiscations.

I am sure the Israeli headline conscience would answer "never mind, it is only the life and soul of a Palestinian boy." The day Israel starts showing respect for the life and soul of a Palestinian will be the day Israel finds itself at peace with itself and with its neighbours.

The various comments that were made by the prime minister and some of his hand-picked advisors would leave many people shocked at the political nightmare that is uttered.

The notion that the Israelis have given the Palestinians weapons is a very serious manipulation of events and history as it carries implications: it appears as if Israel is doing the Palestinian cause favours that it can take back any time it wants.

How can Israel elect a man who cannot hold a discussion without fabricating notions to discredit the Palestinian people? Being smart in negotiations has nothing to do with the ability to falsify facts and fabricate solutions.

One would have to conclude that Israel has a very short memory: forgetting what it means to be persecuted.

Wajih Murad,
P.O. Box: 830387,
Amman.

Double trouble

To the Editor:

IT SEEMS that Cathy King (letters to Jordan Times, "Blasted situation", Sept. 28) and my own family are suffering the same torture.

The school next to us moved into the adjacent villa a year after we moved into our apartment. The noise pollution is quite unbelievable. We have had the ubiquitous loud speaker system start at 6:50 a.m. and finish at 5:30 p.m. We even suffer on a Friday. The children are screamed at over the speaker system and martial music is played at full volume. How the children manage to work in their classrooms is beyond me.

But I wonder if we share the same irritation of litter thrown everywhere. The lane between our house and the school is used as a rubbish dump. Treble parking outside the school is commonplace.

The other interesting point — apparently "our school" exists in its own special part of Jordan — no water shortage here. Buses and pathways are hosed down liberally on a daily basis.

Surely schools should be teaching the children no to litter, to conserve water and to be considerate to others; especially no noise pollution.

Virginia Hazou,
Amman.

Neighbours

hope, that the peace process will prevail in the region, and mutual trust between the warring sides will be restored.

As the peace process moves forward, the region will be a better place for all. The peace process is a long-term project, and it will take time to see the results. But the hope is that the peace process will prevail in the region, and mutual trust between the warring sides will be restored.

TERS MEMORY

The King said he felt during the violence that "we were on the verge of looking at — and in my case my life's work — that of my dear grandfather's — that of my dear colleague — and somebody, so many others..." towards achieving peace in the Middle East and that he was "very, very distressed and disturbed about it."

The King said he spoke in Washington with Mr. Netanyahu with "honesty and candour."

"I don't think he would have accepted anything — or expected anything less than that: nor would I have done anything other than that," the King said. "I pointed out my views regarding what was happening. We challenged its magnitude, and what I thought would come out of that meeting: in particular, reaffirmation of all the commitments with time limit to their process into facts on the ground, maintaining the status quo as far as the West Bank and Jerusalem were concerned."

The King said he specifically raised the issue of the controversial tunnel in Arab East Jerusalem and noted that he had suggested that the entire issue be examined closely under U.N. auspices by Muslim, Christian and Jewish representatives under the auspices of the United Nations.

"We have been working hard for many years now on trying to see where we have the same view on matters, on trying to bring us closer together, and I thought maybe the introduction of such a group to oversee that nothing is done which is wrong, and to bring us closer together would have been a good idea, but again they're closely felt," the King said.

At the same time, the issue of an Israeli withdrawal from Hebron was also a top priority and had to be addressed, the King said.

But, the king said in reply to a question, "as we stand, nothing was done, except to permit movement as rapidly as possible beginning next Sunday. So that's all."

Asked whether he was disappointed over the outcome of the summit in terms of what was being originally sought, the King said:

"I'm not thinking of Arabs, nor am I thinking of Palestinians, nor am I thinking of Israelis. I'm thinking if all the barriers were brought down for young people's hope that you could see in their eyes, and the coming together of children, of orphans of terrible wars, of the hopes of the people coming to realise that without these barriers, they're one and the same and they suffer the same difficulties and face the same challenges and have the same hopes and aspirations. All this will be placed in jeopardy..."

Asked whether he felt that Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Arafat felt the gravity of the situation

Summit not a failure or success

(Continued from page 1)

was the result of Palestinian frustration over the stagnation of the peace process.

The King said he thought a reversal of the peace process was impossible. "Yet, unfortunately, over the recent past, we have seen a deterioration in our region, particularly with regard to the Palestinians and the Israelis," said the King, describing the developments as "very frightening, very sad and very distressing."

"We kept hearing that whatever Israeli governments before had committed to would be respected and implemented," the King said. But the "lack of progress towards implementation, particularly in the case of Hebron... also contributed to a situation which brought things" to a serious stage, he added.

"We have lost, as you know, Israelis and Palestinians alike, in the recent clashes, and conditions on the ground became even worse with troops surrounding cities," the King said. "I believe that this was arrested at least with the meeting here, and with the hope that's generated for the future."

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Christopher

(Continued from page 1)

"In that sense everyone comes out a winner but we've got a long way to go," he said. "There are difficult times ahead. I think we need to see some results flowing from

as strong as he did, the King said: "I believe they did, and Prime Minister Netanyahu in parting said... I promised I would surprise you. So I hope it will be a pleasant surprise and that it will come soon."

"Arafat has, I think, shown great courage to have moved the way he has, to have committed to peace, and I have been saying for a long period of time, and I must say this too, the Israeli government has been (trying) to get all the help we needed. So let's hope that yesterday was a turning point..."

The King expressed deep appreciation for the efforts of the Clinton administration and recalled past American contributions to peace efforts in the Middle East.

"We are grateful to the president for all he has done," said the King. "It's a matter of history. I think that without belittling the efforts of others, it was a fact that in the late 40s, it was a Democrat administration where a ceasefire was brought about — and the beginning of negotiations. And it was in the Carter administration, as well, that we saw peace between Egypt and Israel, and it is with President Clinton that we worked so hard to achieve not only an Israeli peace but to begin the process on the Palestinian track."

Asked whether he agreed with those who suggested that the Palestinians went home from the Washington summit empty-handed, the King said: "We've got this firm commitment which they undertook upon themselves as well to begin these talks on Sunday. I think they have gained the understanding of a great many people in the world, and for example, in the press conference yesterday, when the president represented all of us: that saved us a lot of difficulty in trying to express our feelings adequately. The questions — further questions — are on the mind of the world and they're not relevant."

The King said he would stay involved in all efforts for peace and "I'm going to do whatever I can to help."

In reply to a question on the possibility of renewed violence in the region, the King said it was possible "unless progress is made" in the peace negotiations.

"That is where I think that some in the United States would suggest that we pressure Israel. I want all the friends in the United States, and those in particular with whom I've had so many contacts in the recent months, and in Israel and the Arabs and all the peace camp, to have a say... to come out and be counted..."

The King said he told Mr. Netanyahu of Jordan's disappointment that the Kingdom was informed of his decision to open the new entrance to the tunnel despite the fact that a Netanyahu envoy, David Gold, was in Amman only 24 hours before the Israeli move.

The King said he told Mr. Netanyahu that the opening of the new entrance to the tunnel was "a problem and it has created a problem."

"I don't think that it comes in isolation of a lot of other problems. So that had been, as they say, the straw that broke the camel's back," he added.

The King said the question of the tunnel was not an issue that was interpreted as "anti-Islamic."

"I think the case is one of the status quo that existed in the city and exists in the city," said the King. "To tamper with it is something that obviously creates a reaction. That's where we need two things. We need to concentrate on the religious establishment and on getting the followers of three great religions, the descendants of Abraham to sit together, to work together, to try to elevate Jerusalem, which is already in my eyes elevated above the questions of the sovereignty of this or the other. It is, it is our city, all of us, in terms of the whole city, in terms of the Holy City, and hopefully the rest of it will also be a symbol of peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis."

those negotiations."

Mr. Ross told NBC Television Middle East region remains a "tinderbox" but that the agreement by the Israeli and Palestinian leaders to open a dialogue is "very positive."

But, he added, "we're not out of the woods."

The King said he remained "hopeful, and optimistic, but it really shook me just to see things deteriorate so rapidly after so much that looked so promising. But we will do whatever we can. We have to do it."

The king remained in Washington after the end of the summit on Wednesday, holding talks with senior U.S. officials on strengthening Jordanian-American relations in all spheres.

The King held talks with Secretary of Defence William Perry at the Pentagon. In the meeting, attended by Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Abdul Karim Kabariti, the King and Mr. Perry discussed Jordanian-U.S. ties in all fields and the American military assistance to Jordan.

The King and Mr. Perry reviewed Jordan's status as an ally of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) which in turn would give Jordan a relative advantage in obtaining advanced military technology.

At present Egypt, Israel, South Korea, Australia and Japan now enjoy such status.

Meanwhile, Minister of Information Marwan Muasher, in remarks about the Washington summit, said that the peace process was facing a crisis and the only way out of the deadlock was through the implementation of the agreements concluded between the Palestinian National Authority and Israel before moving to final status negotiations.

"The results of the summit were indeed below expectations," Dr. Muasher told the Jordan Times. "Jordan believes that the Middle East peace process remains in serious jeopardy despite the summit and that the only way to rescue it is through actions on the ground rather than promises. We need to see practical measures."

"Israel should, without delay, implement all that has been agreed with the Palestinians in the formal agreements and pursue the final status negotiations," he said.

"Jordan will do all it can to achieve this objective and will remain closely involved in all efforts to advance the peace process," he added.

Asked whether Jordan felt that the summit produced a better working relations between Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Arafat, Dr. Muasher said: "Certainly the two leaders got to know each other better and hopefully this will prove to be a positive element. However, Jordan continues to insist that people should see concrete measures being implemented on the ground rather than promises and sentiments expressed in words."

In an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation, Dr. Muasher said Thursday King Hussein had contributed to a great extent towards pressing the Israeli prime minister into realising the need for Israel to respond to the Palestinian demands and for progress to be made.

"We are still pursuing our effort to stimulate the peace process," said the minister, expressing hope that Sunday's Palestinian-Israeli meeting would mark a new beginning.

Dr. Muasher said that Jordan was also trying to bring closer the views of the various parties and to make the Israeli government understand the Arab countries' position and the need for Israel to respect the agreements it has signed with the Palestinians.

While the summit fell short of expectations, he said, it had averted "a real catastrophe."

Dr. Muasher referred to the controversial tunnel in Arab East Jerusalem and noted that the Jordan-Israel peace treaty explicitly provided for Jordan to maintain supervision of the Islamic shrines in Jerusalem.

"We see that we should continue to fill this vacuum until the sites have been restored to Palestinian sovereignty," he said, adding: "We demand that the Israeli government respect the treaty's provisions including those which pertain to Jerusalem."

President Clinton and Mr. Netanyahu insisted the talks were beneficial. Pleading for patience before rendering a judgement, the president wrapped up the meetings Wednesday, acknowledging, "We have not made as much progress as I wish we had."

Palestinians keep protests in check ahead of talks

(Continued from page 1)

show that he can help keep quiet in a town whose 120,000 Palestinians and 450 Jewish settlers live as uneasy neighbours. The curfew is lifted only for three hours a day in the morning.

On Friday, as the Israeli military reimposed the curfew, Palestinian security agents riding in dark blue trucks or on foot urged residents not to throw stones. Israeli soldiers in jeeps kept about 15 metres behind Palestinian security. On other streets of Hebron, Israeli jeeps led the convoys.

At Al Aqsa Mosque, where Israeli police shot dead four Palestinians in clashes last week, Palestinian preachers demanded that worshippers quit throwing stones.

"We don't want to give the aggressors a chance to close the mosque. Please go home quietly," prayer leader Mohammed Hussein said over a loudspeaker after the noon prayers.

Police had ringed the compound, but they did not react and only asked Jewish worshippers to step back from the Western Wall, which runs beneath Al Aqsa.

The Jerusalem police commander, Arieh Amit, said his men were under orders to show restraint.

"For Sunday's talks to begin well... we needed to do everything in order that the prayers finish peacefully," Mr. Amit told Israel Radio.

A day earlier, the militant group Hamas distributed a leaflet in Jerusalem telling followers to confront Israeli soldiers following Friday prayers to show their opposition to the talks.

But Mahmoud Zahar, a Hamas spokesman in Gaza, denied that Hamas had made the call for protests.

It is not uncommon for Hamas to deny leaflets put out under its name and reflects the deep divisions within the group.

Mr. Zahar said the group had a wait-and-see attitude with "the expectation of the negotiations' failure."

"The aim of Israel is to waste time," said Mr. Zahar. "We are very sure nothing will happen."

Without success, he said, "all things are open."

That sentiment was echoed by Palestinians elsewhere. Some feared the talks would be a repeat of the two-day summit in Washington which they felt gave them no gains.

Outside the Abdul Naser Mosque in the West Bank town of Al Bireh, one worshipper warned violence might erupt again soon.

"Arafat can maybe control the situation for a little while but the people won't be patient forever," said Abbas Mohammed, a 35-year-old labourer. "The anger is still here."

Arafat

(Continued from page 1)

tinian territories.

The special Dublin summit has been called to discuss the EU's own workings.

Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini said it was for EU leaders to make clear their views on how the Middle East peace process should be conducted.

"It is important in the light of recent developments that the

heads of state and government... give a sense of direction and (express) the way they think this process should go," Mr. Dini told Reuters.

In Rome, Mr. Arafat met for an hour with Mr. Prodi, Mr. Dini and other Italian officials, then flew to Paris.

"We are absolutely interested in an expanded European political role. We discussed this at length with Italy," said Nemed Hammad, Palestinian representative in Italy, who sat in on the talks.

Earlier, Mr. Arafat briefed



Palestinian women with their children walk through the deserted streets of the West Bank city of Hebron during a curfew break on Friday (Reuters photo)

Mr. Netanyahu on Friday briefed his cabinet on his Washington summit with Mr. Arafat and on the proposals he plans to make to the Palestinians on Sunday.

Mr. Netanyahu, who took office in June, has insisted that the terms of redeployment in Hebron be renegotiated to provide better protection to the Jewish settlers in Hebron. Under the initial plan, Israeli soldiers were to withdraw from 80 per cent of the Hebron area, and Palestinian police were to be deployed in their stead.

Israel Radio said Mr. Netanyahu would propose to the Palestinians on Sunday that Israeli troops maintain hill positions overlooking Hebron settler enclaves. In exchange, the Palestinians would be given control over territory elsewhere in town, the report said.

A chief Palestinian negotiator, Hassan Asfour, said Friday that the Palestinians were not willing to renegotiate the earlier agreement on Hebron. However, Mr. Arafat has said he was ready to discuss some changes in security arrangements.

Mr. Asfour denied reports that Mr. Netanyahu had given the Palestinians to understand, via the Americans, that he hoped to complete the Hebron redeployment talks within 45 days.

Mr. Asfour said the Pales-

tinians were weary of the Israeli leader, despite his statements Thursday that he had had a change of heart about Mr. Arafat, the man he had held in contempt and avoided meeting for three months after a May election victory.

The Palestinian negotiator said there had already been too many delays and subterfuges. "With the Israelis, you don't know anything. It's very difficult to be sure of anything," Mr. Asfour said.

Since returning Thursday from the Washington summit, Mr. Netanyahu has described Mr. Arafat as a partner with whom he could "sit together to resolve problems" and "negotiate peace without violence."

It has raised both suspicions and hopes in Israel. Mr. Netanyahu had long considered Mr. Arafat a terrorist and kept the Palestinian leader waiting for three months after Israel's May elections until begrudgingly agreeing to a quick meeting. Only last week, Mr. Netanyahu blamed Mr. Arafat for inciting clashes over the Jerusalem tunnel.

"When you get to know somebody you get to change your opinion," Mr. Netanyahu explained after their first lengthy one-on-one talks. "As you get to know somebody better, you can have different appreciations of their character, and I think that happened. I'd like to believe it is mutual."

Tunisian President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali on the summit in Washington.

In Rabat, Mr. Arafat said Thursday the future of the

Middle East peace process depended on Israeli moves.

"It depends how the Israelis will deal. Especially we are insisting they implement accu-

Today is JERUSALEM DAY

Open invitation to the public to attend the seventh seminar entitled:

The Arabs' Inalienable Rights In Jerusalem

which will be held under the patronage of

His Excellency Taher Al Masri

from Oct. 5 to Oct. 8, 1996

at the Royal Cultural Centre - Amman

The opening takes place at 4:00 p.m.

Addresses by: Dr. Subhi Ghoshieh, chairman of the Jerusalem Day Committee

Haj Zaki Al Ghoul who will deliver the Jerusalem Municipality's address and Mr. Taher Al Masri.

The first discussion starts at 4:30 p.m. on Oct. 5, 1996 when

Dr. Thomas Thompson

will deliver an address entitled: Continuity and Change in Jerusalem's

Population from the Earliest Times to the Greco-Roman Period.

At 5:30 p.m. the book exhibition will be opened

activities of Sunday, Oct. 6, 1996

4:00 p.m.: Lecture on Arab Cannanites - Builders of Jerusalem and Palestinian Cities by Professor Dr. Mahmoud Ahmad Al Zu'bi - Damascus University

4:30 p.m.: The Right of Return of Displaced Jerusalemites - lecture by Professor John B. Quigley

5:30 p.m.: Ownership of the Holy Lands by lawyer Najwa Tawfiq Falah - Mosul University - Iraq

6:15 p.m.: Religious Shrines and their Protection by Professor Dr. Mustafa Ahmad Fuad - Tanta University - Egypt.

Egypt to reduce its bureaucracy at IMF request

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt must slash by two per cent the number of its civil servants in line with an agreement it will sign on Oct. 11 with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Western economic experts have said.

The reduction in the more than three million civil servants will start next year, said the experts who declined to be named. The agreement, which will be signed in Washington, will be the third between Egypt and the IMF since Cairo launched in 1991 a widespread reforms programme under the sponsorship of the IMF and the World Bank.

It is a "stand-by" accord spread over two years, calling for structural reforms such as a reduction in customs tariffs, a fiscal reform and the modernisation of the financial and banking sector.

The IMF representative in Cairo, Aravind Subramanian, refused to confirm or deny that the agreement aimed at reducing the number of civil servants.

"The accord does not call for any sackings," he told AFP. But he acknowledged that "privatisation and liberalisation can have negative social consequences in the short term but the social fund will absorb that."

According to a recent report published by the National Planning Institute, "the level of unemployment disguised in the public sector is not more than three per cent."

The number of civil servants has doubled since 1960 thanks to a government pledge to hire every secondary school and university graduate.

Mr. Subramanian, meanwhile, stressed that the reforms programme "does not contain any hike in taxes or (consumer) prices."

"There is no question in raising the price of bread," he said in statements published by the French-language weekly *Ahram Hebdo*.

"The objective is focused on structural reforms," he said, adding that this meant development of the private sector through privatisations, the liberalisation of trade and easing up bureaucracy.

Mr. Subramanian said that trade in Egypt was dominated by the public sector and "some of the highest trade barriers in the world."

He stressed that the public deficit had been under control since 1991, adding that the current challenge was growth.

According to Western estimates, growth stood at four per cent for the 1995-1996 fiscal year which ended in June while official figures put it at 4.9 per cent, compared to 3.2 per cent last year.

The reforms programme aims for a 7-8 per cent growth. Meanwhile exports have declined by about eight per cent, losing nearly \$4 billion from the \$5 billion reached in the 1994-1995 fiscal year.

Investments, namely in the private sector, remain insufficient and represent 17 per cent of the gross domestic product at a time when a developing country like Egypt needs 25 per cent, one economist said.

A law liberalising investments is to emerge under the new reforms programme.

According to Mr. Subramanian the foreign-investment situation "improved over the past nine months" with foreign investments representing \$500 to \$600 million in shares on the stock market. Egypt is not expected to need an injection of funds in addition to the reforms programme since it already boasts \$18 billion in foreign reserves and a debt that has stabilised at \$31 billion.

The agreement with the IMF will also enable Egypt to save \$350 million annually on the servicing of its foreign debt.

The Paris Club which groups public creditors is expected to rapidly agree to scrap Egypt's third debt issue following an initial agreement struck in 1991, at the end of the Gulf war.

The IMF had refused to approve scrapping the debt before a devaluation of the Egyptian pound but later dropped the demand, requesting instead a resumption of the privatisation programme.

Finance ministers conclude meetings on debt relief and corruption issues

WASHINGTON (AFP)

— World finance ministers Thursday concluded a three-day IMF-World Bank meeting here having launched an ambitious debt-relief initiative, talked openly of corruption and highlighted the need for equitable social development.

The annual conference of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, attended by an estimated 4,000 officials from 181 countries, was preceded by several days of separate meetings of key committees from the two institutions.

The IMF's policy-making Interim Committee produced an 11-point guide to what has become known here as "good governance," meaning deregulated, transparent and corruption-free administration of public affairs.

But the accent from the Washington-based IMF and World Bank on government standards unsettled some delegations, who warned that the new focus should not be abused by rich countries as a means either to interfere in local affairs or to gain trade advantages.

The scheme is estimated to cost at least \$5.6 billion, according to IMF officials, who said some countries could start benefiting from the initiative by the end of the year.

Approval had been held up in a dispute within the IMF on financing the plan, with several members — notably Germany — objecting to a proposal by IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus to sell a

small portion of the fund's gold holdings. The issue was sidestepped — temporarily at least — when it was determined that the IMF had sufficient resources to take part in the programme.

But the disagreement is far from resolved and U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin warned that the IMF would eventually have to sell gold, perhaps as early as 1999.

Concern was also expressed about the involvement of bilateral creditors, who agreed to reduce up to 80 per cent — rather than the 90 per cent sought by the World Bank — of some of the debt held by participating countries.

Mr. Camdessus and Mr. Wolfensohn broke new ground at the joint meetings by raising the issue of corruption, which the latter called "a cancer" that was thwarting development.

He warned Thursday that the bank would cancel any project where evidence of corruption was detected. "We're anxious to put teeth into what we're

doing in issues over which we have control," he said at a closing press conference.

"What we can't do is go and run every country we operate in... We're putting a focus on something that everyone's been talking about but which has never had this direction."

Mr. Wolfensohn said the bank would offer technical and financial assistance to countries engaged in their own anti-corruption efforts. But he insisted: "The bank is not permitted and should not interfere in the political affairs of countries and we will not do so."

Mr. Wolfensohn added that the bank would also focus on corruption in developed countries, where it would encourage the establishment of "voluntary guidelines" on business practices.

The anti-corruption theme was linked to the concept of good governance, which came to dominate debate here.

"Good governance is inextricably linked to efficiency of resource allocation, to incentives for savings and investment and increasingly to external competitiveness," Mr. Camdessus declared in closing remarks.

"Capital inflows tend to be attracted to countries where investors can count on transparent and responsible conduct of public affairs," he pointed out.

But among some delegations, notably India, Pakistan and Malaysia, saw good governance as heralding a possible bid by the developed world to link trade and aid to such internal matters as human rights, labour standards and the environment.

The meeting also highlighted a renewed commitment to social development to alleviate hardships felt by the poor whose countries follow bank-IMF guidelines and slash budgets.

Delegates, according to Mr. Camdessus, spoke repeatedly of "the importance of investing in health and education, the role such investments play in social equity and the link between social equity and the sustainability of the reform process."

Iraqi banks to sell hard currency

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq, in a bid to improve its battered currency, has allowed state banks to sell hard currency in exchange for dinars for the first time, an Iraqi senior bank official said.

"Upon orders from President Saddam Hussein, we have taken new measures (to sell hard currency to people) and we have started implementation today," Zuhair Kasab, deputy director of the state-run Al Rasheed Bank told Reuters.

The Iraqi dinar has surged to 1,370 against the U.S. dollar up from 1,550 on Tuesday.

The new exchange rate set by the banks was 1,340 dinars to the dollar. The price will be revised each morning, Mr. Kasab said.

"A committee was set up at

the central bank which meets every morning and decides the rate. But it would be less than that of the commercial markets any way," Mr. Kasab said.

Traders and money changers in Baghdad said the government move to sell hard currency was aimed at

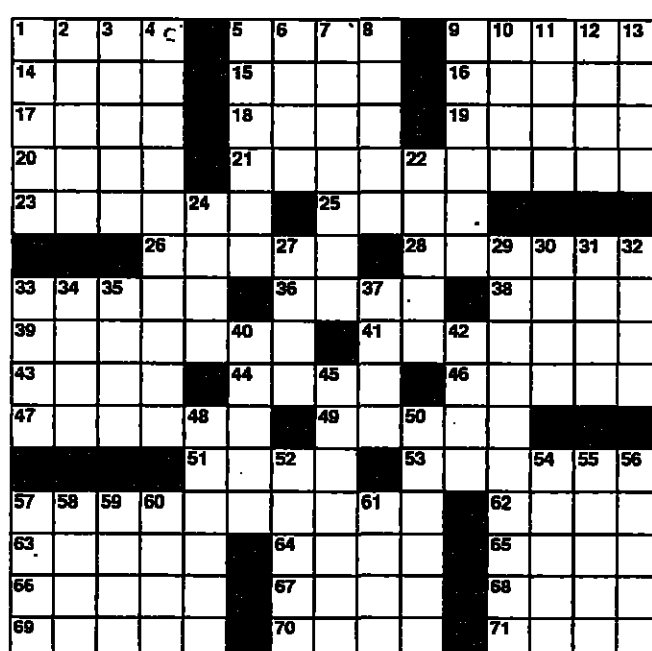
improving the value of the dinar.

"A few days ago the dinar stood at 1,700 against the dollar. Now after this decision it went up to 1,370 only hours after its implementation... The dinar will gain more and more," one trader said.

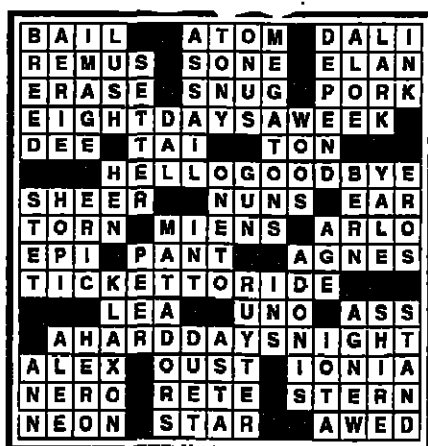
THE Daily Crossword by Theresa Hackett

ACROSS

- 1 Like some proportions
- 5 — avis
- 9 Floating platforms
- 14 — colada
- 15 Frosted
- 16 Arctic abode
- 17 Narrow aperture
- 18 Nail
- 19 Former NY governor
- 20 Trough contents
- 21 Take on a dangerous mission
- 23 Power
- 25 Marsh duck
- 26 AM/FM device
- 28 Fern-like plants
- 33 City in Ethiopia
- 36 "Star"
- 38 Solo
- 39 Biochemical catalyst
- 41 Schemes
- 43 Israeli airline
- 44 Journey
- 46 Overflowing
- 47 Stain Tajano singer
- 49 Beautiful girl
- 51 Wide-eyed
- 53 Parenthetical remarks
- 57 "Moon Shadow" singer
- 62 Room in a casa
- 63 Forgive
- 64 Med. school subj.
- 65 Scottish wear
- 66 Mountain spur
- 67 Crescent
- 68 Great Lake
- 69 One beyond help
- 70 Brand
- 71 Dell leaves



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- 5 Poked fun at
- 6 Farmer's measure
- 7 Home seller's agent
- 8 Confuse
- 9 Abundantly
- 10 Fever
- 11 Fluffy mass
- 12 Real-life TV cop
- 13 Chimney dirt
- 22 Tasteless
- 24 Zhivago's love
- 27 Caesar's way
- 29 Crystal contact
- 30 Word with code or rug
- 31 Fades
- 32 Cumberbund
- 33 Garden implements
- 34 Spindle
- 35 Iran money
- 37 Get a load of
- 40 Thespian's milieu
- 42 Dupes
- 45 Naive girl
- 48 Talk idly
- 50 Original document
- 52 Some rinks
- 54 Creamery
- 55 "Dallas" name
- 56 Gorges
- 57 Rock projection
- 58 Flying prefix
- 59 Revenuers
- 60 Position
- 61 Grandma

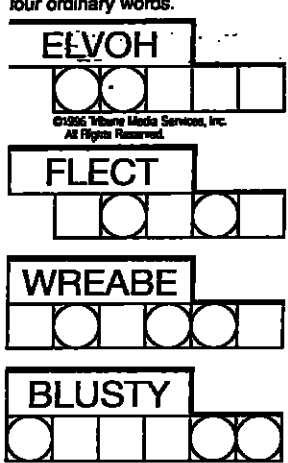
THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



"If fish is good for dieting, how come our cat's body looks like a waterbed?"

JUMBLE.

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Print answer here: _____

Saturday's Jumbles: FILMY REARM INTACT PARTY
Answer: How the delegates described the political convention — "PARTY" TIME

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argison



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You may find it hard to gain the cooperation of another today, however this soon changes and a great deal can be accomplished. Later this evening you can meet with close friends and have fun together.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) Plan with your mate how to have the days ahead brighter and have greater success. You can use diplomacy later this evening to gain the support you desire for a new project which is important to your prosperity.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You may have difficulty with an older person or situation today, however things clear and you have a pleasant time. Later this evening will be good for you to seek out knowledgeable people and gain their insight.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Something very important to you in the business world may not work out today, however you must make the effort. Later this evening will be good for you to meet with a bigwig and make the effort to handle any situation ahead.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You may have to wait a while today before getting into some entertainment which appeals to you, however things clear and opportunities appear. Later this evening can be spent with your mate to have a pleasant time together.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Seek wisdom if you have to take a little trip today to gain it and study fine writings. Tend to correspondence today this evening and then you can relax with your loved ones and have the days ahead for more successful matters.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Things go a little slowly today, so try to help your close friends and you soon gain fine benefits from this. Later this evening can be spent with those in authority and discussions can take place where you can be successful.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) There may be delays where financial and property matters need handling today, however this will insure for the better. Later this evening can be used to devise a plan of action to completed your current project.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Make a note of the fine ideas you have today concerning your advancement and expansion of your career. Later this evening will be good for you to consult with fellow associates and devise a course of action for your prosperity.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Get busy improving the situation at place more enjoyable to live in. A close friend could be disagreeable so steer clear at this time so you can avoid a potential conflict in the making.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Your mind is working on all cylinders today and a great deal may be efficiently accomplished if you seek out the right information. Tonight you can meet with those in authority and discuss your progress in your career activities.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Plan how to make your dreams materialize today, then go after them in a positive manner. Tonight avoid demanding people who have only one thing on their minds and who are not willing to listen to any other suggestions.

Birthstone of October: Opal — Tourmaline

Business & Finance

Jordan Times, Saturday, October 5, 1996

9

AFM weathers fears over peace process and Israeli-Palestinian violence

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prices at the Amman stock market slipped by more than one percent last week but huge losses stemming from fears sparked over the future of the Middle East peace process and related economic expectations as a result of

Israeli-Palestinian violence did not materialise, brokers said Friday.

"It was mostly business as usual last week although the market did see a slip in prices and a strong slide in turnover," said a broker. "People largely opted to retain their holdings, waiting for concrete develop-

ments on the peace process at the Washington summit."

The Amman Financial Market (AFM) said turnover for the business week ending Thursday was 3.5 million dinars, down from the previous week's 6.6 million, with 2.8 million shares changing hands under 2.642 deals.

Daily average trading was 700,000 dinars compared with the previous week's 1.3 million dinars.

The official AFM share price index closed at 147.59 points, down two points or 1.3 percent from the week's opening of 149.59 points, the weekly market report said.

Separate sectoral indices showed that commercial banks and financial institutions slipped by 1.6 percent, insurance firms 0.1 percent, industrials 1.1 percent and services sector 0.9 percent. Industrials accounted for 1.97 million dinars of the

weekly turnover, followed by commercial banks, financial institutions and with 1.07 million dinars, services 0.49 million dinars and insurance 20,000 dinars.

Stocks of 82 companies were involved in the week's trading, with only six of them closing with gains, 68 slipping and eight remaining unchanged by the end of the week's business.

According to brokers, the slip in prices was not directly related to fears resulting from the flare-up in the Palestinian territories. "People seem to have taken such fears in their stride but

there was a marked reluctance to conclude major buying or selling deals," said a broker, who, like other AFM dealers, cannot be identified by name.

The slip in prices, according to the broker, came when individual investors sought liquidity to switch their holdings and the drop was evenly spread.

According to Pearl Consulting, a private sector firm which maintains its own market indicators, the general slip in prices during the week was 1.55 percent, with commercial banks and financial institutions losing

1.92 percent, insurance firms 0.07 percent, services companies 1.53 percent and industrials 1.56 percent.

Separate Pearl indices showed that commercial banks and financial institutions slipping by one percent, investment banks by 5.46 percent, specialised credit institutions by 0.83 percent, and Islamic banks 1.86 percent.

In the services sector, Pearl said energy firms lost 2.61 percent, transport companies 0.48 percent, real estate firms 1.26 percent, press and publication companies 1.99 percent and

entities in the education and related sectors 0.57 percent. Tourism companies and hotels gained 0.11 percent.

Among industrials, according to Pearl, mining companies slipped by 0.88 percent, chemical and petroleum firms 1.98 percent, construction companies 0.43 percent, entities in the supply and consumption sectors 2.36 percent, pharmaceuticals 1.56 percent, engineering firms 4.55 percent, textile companies 1.14 percent and packing firms 0.52 percent.

REUTERS

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The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.5302	0.6391	1.2562	111.42	1.3609	1520.55	1.7167	5.1775	
DE Mark	0.6391	1.0000	0.4173	0.8211	72.81	0.8891	993.21	1.3219	3.3838
GB Sterling	1.5647	1.5647	1.0000	1.9664	174.46	2.1294	2378.20	2.6856	6.1009
CHF Franc	0.7961	121.71	0.5080	1.0000	88.58	1.0825	1209.39	136.57	4.1196
JP Yen	0.0090	1.3721	0.5727	1.1268	1.0000	1.2203	13.83	153.93	4.6437
CA Dollar	0.7348	1.1203	0.4690	0.9179	1.22	1.1142	1.2696	3.7934	
IT Lira	0.0007	1.0058	0.4196	0.8826	1365.93	0.8946	1.128	3.4046	
NL Guilder	0.5825	89.10	0.3720	73.18	64.88	0.7926	885.04	3.0182	
FR Franc	0.1931	0.2954	0.1233	24.2900	21.50	0.2527	33.14	33.1400	

Energy	Last	Previous
Brent	24.40	23.70
W. Texas	24.80	24.00
Bony	24.40	23.70
Dubai	21.25	20.71
UL Gas	201.00	201.00

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2686	0.4081	0.17041	0.33522	29.7362
AE Dirham	0.2724	0.41698	0.17409	0.34247	30.3785
KW Dinar	3.3344	5.10465	2.13083	4.19287	371.885
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.06009	1.6952	3.33444	295.77
CY Pound	2.1339	3.2648	1.3827	2.8802	237.728

Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	380.1	380.5
Silver (oz's)	4.91	4.93
Platinum (oz's)	383.5	384.5
AL (3 Months)	1354	1356
CU (3 Months)	1910	1914
Zinc (3 Months)	1019	1021
Lead (3 Months)	762	764
NI (3 Months)	7120	7140

Period	1	3	6	9	1
Cncy	Month	Months	Months	Months	Year
USD	5.25	5.42	5.55	5.64	5.75
GBP	5.68	5.87	5.69	5.77	5.91
JPY	0.31	0.33	0.35	0.40	0.45
DEM	3.00	3.05	3.06	3.08	3.06
FRF	3.40	3.47	3.50	3.56	3.61
CHF	1.31	1.40	1.46	1.54	1.54
ITL	8.06	7.86	7.73	7.57	7.41

Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr-Ch
New York	DOW JONES	5932.85	-1.12	-0.02	5942.17	5917.2	5933.97
New York	S&P 500	0.0	0	0	0	0	692.78
London	FT-SE 100	3987.5	-12.5	-0.31	3994.6	3982.2	4000
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	21148.03	-183.47	-0.86	21267.4	21080	21331.5
Paris	CAC 40	2129.7	-6.39	-0.3	2133.28	2124.48	2136.09
Frankfurt	DAX	2676.6	0.1	0	2679.35	2675.18	2676.5

Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lb)	114.17	Spot
Cocoa (5/ton)	1502	Spot
Sugar (5/ton)	332.5	Spot
Wheat (5/ton)	169	Spot
Soyas (c/lb)	22.55	Spot
Tea (5/100)	120	Spot
Barley (5/bsh)	2.68	Spot
Rice (5/ton)	455	Spot

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* JOD Cross Rates

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

Abu Hassan slams government for neglecting and disregarding views of private sector

By Abdul Salam Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The private sector has sent an official memorandum to the Prime Ministry requesting that the government postpone discussion of two draft laws on customs and on food pending the private sector's thorough examination of these drafts.

Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI) President Khaldoun Abu Hassan, who made the announcement Thursday, said "the draft law on food does not include the views and the proposals submitted by a special private sector committee."

The special committee, which included representatives of the ACI, the Union of Food Merchants and the Amman Chamber of Commerce had prepared a memorandum and referred it to

the minister of health providing amendments and proposals.

"The health ministry submitted the 1996 draft law on food to the Prime Ministry without taking into consideration the special committee's proposals and remarks about the original draft," said Mr. Abu Hassan.

Expressing dissatisfaction with the draft law in its present form, Mr. Abu Hassan said that it grants the right to the director of the food department and his staff to close down factories and other food processing firms rather than referring any case connected with these firms to the court or the health minister.

Commenting on the customs draft law, Mr. Abu Hassan said: "The private sector had participated in the study and preparation of a draft law on customs in

conjunction with the Customs Department. The private sector was involved in intensive discussions with the Customs Department over the past two years during which the two sides agreed on a joint formula for a draft law that was satisfactory for both the public and private sectors and in line with the country's economic aspirations."

"As was the case with the food law the suggestions and proposals of the private sector's special committee were not considered and, subsequently, the original draft law was submitted to the Prime Ministry without taking the private sector's remarks into account," said Mr. Abu Hassan.

Meanwhile, another private sector committee entrusted with drawing up a draft law on securities said Wednesday that its

members have not had the chance to study the draft which is sponsored by the government and which will be referred to Parliament for examination.

The committee, which groups representatives from the Ministry of Finance, the Amman Financial Market (AFM) and the Jordanian banks, was entrusted with the task by the AFM upon a recommendation from the finance minister earlier this year and has been working on it for the past seven months, according to a committee member who preferred anonymity.

He said that the committee had demanded that experts in such matters be consulted so as to ensure that the draft law would be catering to the latest developments in the international capital markets.

"Subsequently, the experts' services were

engaged and the committee held several meetings with them to study the legal formula of the draft law but later the committee was surprised to learn that the draft law was submitted to the Ministry of Planning without the inclusion of the private sector's views," according to the committee member.

He said that this procedure is not in conformity with the original purpose of creating the committee nor with the natural state of affairs that should dominate the relationship between the two sides and the investment environment in Jordan.

He added that while the draft prepared by all concerned parties contained 198 articles, the draft submitted to the government was composed only of 163 articles.

U.S. confirms Israel loan guarantees for '97

TEL AVIV (R) — The U.S. has confirmed further loan guarantees for Israel covering nearly \$2 billion in the financial year starting Oct. 1.

Israel's finance ministry said Washington will deduct only \$60 million from the total of \$2 billion loan guarantees previously

agreed.

The deduction represents the amount Israel spent last year on Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which the U.S. says are an obstacle to peace.

The Jerusalem Post newspaper said Israel had actually spent \$307 million in the West Bank and Gaza in the

last year but most of it went for construction of bypass roads which the U.S. does not take into account when making its deduction.

Finance Minister Dan Meridor said he was pleased that only \$60 million would be deducted. Increased investment in settlements could mean that

a greater sum would be deducted from the guarantees next year.

Last year the United States also deducted \$60 million but in the previous year \$217 million were deducted and in the year before that, the figure was \$437 million.

The loan guarantees were

approved in 1992 to help Israel absorb new immigrants, especially from the former Soviet Union.

Israel, the biggest single recipient of U.S. foreign aid, may raise a total of \$10 billion with the backing of the guarantees until 1998, when the programme expires.

Daily Business Deal

A review of news from the Arabic press

Trading volume at AFM plunges JD183m in 9 months

** SHARE TRADING at the Amman Financial Market (AMF) during the first nine months of this year involved 113 million shares for a total volume of JD 168 million spread over 122,000 contracts. Compared to the same period of last year, the figures were lower by 18 per cent, or 24 million shares, by 52 per cent, or JD 183 million and by 27 per cent, or 45,000 contracts.

In terms of prices, the retreat was seven per cent according to the index weighted by market value and 18 per cent if not weighted by market value. Prices of industrial shares since the beginning of the year until the end of September were 14 per cent lower and those of the service sector were down by 13 per cent. Prices of insurance shares declined by seven per cent but those of banks maintained their stability (Al Dustour).

Number of industrial exporters rises to 805 entities

** THE NUMBER of industrialists registered at the Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI) and able to export more than JD 10,000 worth of products annually has risen from 717 entities in 1994 to 787 industries in 1995. By the middle of this year the number of industrial exporters increased to 805 entities, ACI President Khaldoun Abu Hassan has said. He noted that Jordanian industrial exports are now reaching 87 countries compared to only six Arab states before four decades.

According to Mr. Abu Hassan, the coefficient of industrial production for the main Jordanian industries, which constitute the focus of activity, was 447 points at the middle of 1996 compared to 353 points at the middle of last year. He pointed out that the industrial growth during the first half of this year was mainly in the clothing and textile sector, chemicals and pharmaceutical industries, cement and steel production, petroleum products, metal pipe and paper and cardboard industries as well as power, fodder, paints and liquid batteries output.

Mr. Abu Hassan indicated that industrial exports during the first five months of 1996 amounted to JD 365 million compared to JD 337 million during the same period of 1995.

The ACI president stressed the general demand of the industrialists to exempt all industrial inputs from customs and taxes to enable the Jordanian manufacturer to boost his competitive capabilities in the national and the outside markets (Al Ra'i).

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World Airline Squash Tournament opens today

By Roufan Nahhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the 11th World Airline Squash Tournament (WAST) opens today (Saturday) at Al Hussein Sports City with 17 international airline companies participating.

The hosting of the competition in Amman follows last year's win for Royal Jordanian (RJ) squash team in the 10th tournament in Dubai after a convincing 5-2 win over British Airways.

The competition, organised by the RJ Squash Club brings together teams from the following airlines: Ansett New Zealand, Ansett Australia, Lufthansa, Emirates, New Guinea, Cathay Pacific, Hunting Cargo, British Airways, Qantas, Air New Zealand, Syrian Arab Air, Egypt Air, Gulf Air, Sabena, Singapore Airlines, Swiss Air, and Royal Jordanian.

Royal Jordanian will have two teams par-

ticipating.

Team A includes: Captain Jawdat Abdel Munem, Yazan Addas, Wael Tabalat, Mohammad Saeed, Qutaibah Hawamdeh, Yazan Abdel Raouf, Hamed Saeed, Samia Hunidi, Arwa Saeed and Rima Jawdat.

Team B: Mazen Matar, Khaled Saeed, Zakaria Rifai, Imad Sharaideh, Hussein Shobaki, Abdul Qader Raideh, Safwan Sharifi, Suha Bitar, Abeer Akasheh and Mai Bat.

RJ squash club Chairman Captain Jawdat Abdel Munem said that the RJ's teams were "well-prepared with high hopes of achieving a second consecutive title win."

He said all preparations were completed to assure the visiting teams a sensational visit to see Jordan and its historical sites.

"A full programme awaits players of participating teams to visit the historical sites of Jordan," Capt. Abdul Munem noted.

Saturday's opening ceremony will start at six pm at Al Hassan Squash Centre.

Witness in Grobbelaar trial held in jail

ALDERSHOT, England (R) — The chief prosecution witness in the match-rigging trial of Bruce Grobbelaar and two other soccer stars was ordered to be held in jail for seven days on Friday charged with trying to pervert the course of justice.

Chris Vincent, 38, was arrested on Tuesday.

The charge sheet read out at a court in Aldershot, southern England, said the Zimbabwean businessman allegedly contacted one of the defendants and offered to fail to turn up at the trial, due to start in January, in exchange for money.

Grobbelaar, a Zimbabwean international who played for Southampton and Liverpool in the English League and is now with Plymouth, retired Aston Villa striker John Fashanu and Dutch-born Wimbledon goalkeeper Hans Seger are accused of giving and taking bribes to fix the result of matches.

They were charged after a police investigation prompted by media claims about the activities of an Asian gambling syndicate in England's Premier League.

Among the charges, Grobbelaar — now the Zimbabwean national coach — is accused of accepting 2,000 pounds (\$3,131) from Vincent, his former business partner, in November 1994 for throwing an unspecified match.

All of them deny the charges.

Sarasola's investment set to pay off

PARIS (AFP) — Enrique Sarasola stands on the threshold of seeing his massive investment in racing rewarded near here Sunday as his runner Helissio starts favourite for the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe.

The charismatic Spaniard, who turned down an \$8-million bid for his star horse last week from a Japanese businessman, shouted "it's only the beginning!"

When Helissio won the Prix Niel in mid September setting him up for Sunday's race.

Sarasola, 56, was the driving force behind Spanish racing in the mid 80s as he went abroad and bought horses cheaply to take back to Spain.

He persuaded top European bloodstock sales company Goffs, based in Ireland, to start up a similar operation in Spain, and in 1992 he won the franchise for the betting at Madrid's Zarzuela racetrack.

He has many admirers in the French racing scene, among them distinguished arts dealer Daniel Wildenstein who has said he would let top jockey Olivier Peslier ride Helissio in the Arc as "I want my friend Enrique Sarasola to win the race".

Sarasola's star rose in tandem with that of his close friend Felipe Gonzalez, the Seville lawyer who ruled Spain as socialist prime minister from 1981 to 1996.

Sarasola's finest hour came during the army's abortive attempted coup on February 23, 1981. Francoist sections of the army invaded parliament and Sarasola, realising the army might try to arrest the Gonzalez family, raced across the city and took them to a safe house.

The act cemented their

friendship, and with the coup a failure, Sarasola's career in business evolved.

Sarasola's multi-faceted business life has included arms exports to Egypt, cement imports from Romania, boxing promotions and acting as the intermediary in the deal to construct a metro system in Medellin, Colombia.

However, Sarasola's main love has always been horses. Though he has had several useful performers in France with Tunisian born Ellie Lellouche, and won most of the top prizes in Spain, he has never had as good a horse as Helissio.

Lellouche did train Vert Armande to run third in the 1992 Arc de Triomphe, but Helissio is in a different class.

Helissio, trained by Lellouche, broke the track record at Longchamp in the Prix Noailles in his first start this season, and followed it up with a hard-earned success in the group one Prix Lupin also at Longchamp.

Following that he failed in the French Derby, being given a terrible ride by Dominique Boeuf who lost the ride afterwards, but recaptured his "champion" tag when he won the group one Grand Prix de Saint Cloud in a July.

Sarasola, who has often revelled in February 23 1981 being his greatest hour, will add October 6 to the list of great days should Helissio prevail on Sunday.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Oldest World Cup winner dies

VERCELLI, Italy (R) — Silvio Piola, the oldest World Cup winning player and one of the greatest forwards in Italian soccer history, has died after a long illness, his family said on Friday. He was 83. Piola played for Italy 34 times, scored 30 goals and was a member of Italy's victorious World Cup squad in France in 1938. His last international call-up came in 1952 against England. Ray Spiller of the British-based Association of Football Statisticians said on Friday: "Our records indicate that Piola was the oldest surviving player to have played in a World Cup winning team." Jimmy Brown who played for the United States in 1930 was the previous oldest World Cup player before he died a couple of years ago, but of course he never played in the World Cup final. At club level, Piola represented pro Vercelli, Lazio and Juventus and was top scorer in the Italian League in 1936-37 and 1942-43. Piola's still holds the record for the number of goals scored by a single player in a Serie A match, six without penalties against Fiorentina in 1933. During his professional career, he scored 395 goals.

Graf fights back

LEIPZIG (R) — Topseed Steffi Graf fought her way past Austria's Judith Wiesner 1-6 6-3 6-2 in the quarter-finals of the \$450,000 Leipzig women's tournament on Thursday. Graf, 27, whose father is on trial for tax evasion, got off to a typically bad start but bounced back for her 11th straight success against Wiesner. After the match, Graf held a 30 minute online news conference with up to 40 million internet users potentially able to quiz her. The event was transmitted in pictures and sound direct from one of the halls in the Leipzig trade fair complex. Graf is due to meet either compatriot Anke Huber or Bulgaria's Magdalena Maleeva in the semifinals. "I am determined to come out the winner at Leipzig and play my best tennis," Graf said after Thursday's victory. Earlier, Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain breezed past Miriam Oremans of the Netherlands with 6-2 6-1. In a quarter-final she meets Czech Helena Sukova.

Boetsch in Lyon quarters

LYON (AFP) — France's Arnaud Boetsch qualified for the quarter-finals of the \$750,000 Lyon ATP tennis tournament here with a 6-7 (5/7), 5-4 retired victory over Russia's Andrei Chesnokov. Boetsch, world ranked 23rd who shone the day before with a superb win over Ukraine's Andrei Medvedev, appeared tired against Chesnokov and was fortunate to make the last eight. The Alsatian started badly, twice losing his service, but he fought back to force a first set tiebreak which he eventually lost seven points to five. In the second set, Boetsch was serving to level for one set all at 5-4 when Chesnokov pulled out with a left calf muscle injury.

Graham tries to lure Brolin

LEEDS (AFP) — Leeds manager George Graham is refusing to take "no" for an answer as he attempts to lure Tomas Brolin back to Elland Road. The Swedish international's agent Lars Petersen has said that 26-year-old Brolin would prefer to stay in Switzerland where his month-long loan spell at FC Zurich officially ended last weekend. But Graham said he would give up the chase. "I still want Tomas to return, meet me over here and resume his career with us. We are short of players and I need him here," he said on Friday. "The invitation is still open. If it fails I will have to leave things with the lawyers because this is a very rare situation," he added. If the 4.25 million pounds striker continues to stay away then Leeds may deny him the chance of playing for another club by refusing to release his international clearance papers. Brolin has already been docked around a reported \$75,000 in wages after failing to return for pre-season training during the reign of Graham's predecessor Howard Wilkinson. "What Tomas needs at the moment is peace, plenty of work on the training ground and lots of games. He feels he can best do that at Zurich," said Petersen.

Yeltsin asks Kohl to back 2004 Games bid

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin asked German Chancellor Helmut Kohl on Friday to back Russia's bid to host the 2004 Olympic Games, the presidential press office said.

The press service said Yeltsin made his request in a telephone conversation with the German chancellor, whom he views as a personal friend.

The two men also discussed bilateral issues and Yeltsin's state of health. The Russian president has been in hospital since September 13 and is due to undergo a heart operation in the next two months.

St. Petersburg, Russia's second city, has bid to hold the 2004 summer Olympics, although it faces competition from nine other cities. Rome, Cape Town and Stockholm are said to be the favourites.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, visiting the International Olympic committee in Switzerland earlier this week, said Russia's bid for the Games was part of its drive to become a "normal, civilised society".

"Russia has taken the path of democracy, of creating a market economy," he said. "We want to be a normal, civilised society. Our choice is for all time, and the processes that have been started in Russia are irreversible."

"The holding of the Olympic Games (in St. Petersburg) would be a forum that would give worldwide recognition of that fact." A shortlist of four or five candidate cities is due to be decided next March and the winner will be announced in September 1997. The next Games will be held in Sydney in the year 2000.



Haluk Yildirim (R) of Ulker Istanbul fights for the ball with Sergei Panov of CSKA Moscow during their European Basketball League match in Moscow (Reuters photo)

Cibona score Euro basketball win

LONDON (R) — Results of men's Euroleague Basketball Championship matches on Thursday:

In Leverkusen: Bayer Leverkusen (Germany) 60 Croatia Split 63 (halftime 33-28)

Leading scorers: Bayer Leverkusen — Tony Dawson 22, Kevin Pritchard 12

Croatia — Damir Tvrđić 19, Ante Grgurević 14

Attendance: 2,500.

Group B

In Zagreb: Cibona Zagreb (Croatia) 78 Alba Berlin (Germany) 68 (46-31)

Leading scorers: Cibona — Damir Mulaomerović 28, Slaven Rimac 12, Zdravko Radulović 11

Alba Berlin — Sasa Obradović 17, Henning Harnisch 14, Wendell Alexis 11

Attendance: 5,500

UEFA expand European Champions League to 24 teams as of 97/98 season

ANTALYA (AFP) — The European Champions League will be extended from 16 to 24 teams for the 1997/98 season. UEFA President Lennart Johansson announced here Thursday.

The move, formulated earlier in May to increase the Champions' League, was formally accepted by the UEFA executive committee.

And that means that the continent's eight strongest soccer nations — England, Italy, France, Spain, Germany, Holland and Belgium — will get a second team into Europe's most prestigious Cup competition.

Under the new format, the defending champions and the winners of Europe's seven strongest leagues will receive automatic berths into a Champions' League consisting

of 24 teams in six groups.

But the expanded format means a number of matches must be played during the summer, with a preliminary round involving champions from 32 countries to be played in July.

The 16 winners then play a qualifying round in August with eight of the remaining national champions plus eight additional high-placed teams battling it out for the 16 Champions' League places up for grabs.

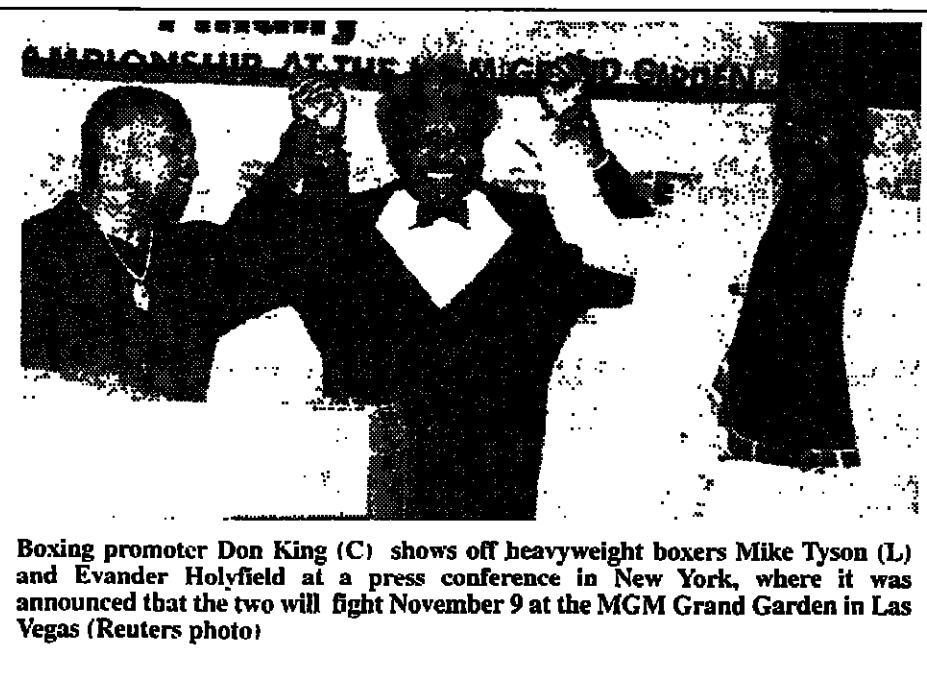
The final pool of 24 teams will be divided into six groups of four, with the winner of each group and the two best runners-up advancing to the quarter-finals.

UEFA President Lennart Johansson also unveiled a plan to stage a tournament between the four continental champions from Europe, Asia, the Americas and Africa.

Johansson revealed that Euro 96 winners Germany have opted not to take part in the event, scheduled for December 1997, and that runners-up the Czech Republic would now be invited.

The executive committee also approved an under-17 tournament between Africa and Europe's top national youth teams to take place between January 29 and February 10, 1997, possibly in Portugal.

Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast and Guinea will represent Africa, with Spain, France, Portugal and Greece representing Europe.



Boxing promoter Don King (C) shows off heavyweight boxers Mike Tyson (L) and Evander Holyfield at a press conference in New York, where it was announced that the two will fight November 9 at the MGM Grand Garden in Las Vegas (Reuters photo)

TODAY AT

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PHILADELPHIA

Christopher Lambert, John Lone
& Joan Chen in

THE HUNTED

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CINEMA TEL:699238
PLAZA

The Arab Cinema Surprise
Ahmad Zakiin
NASER 56

(Arabic)

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:45, 11:00

CINEMA TEL:677420
CONCORD

CONCORD "1"
Robert Redford & Michelle Pfeiffer in
UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CONCORD "2"
Arnold Schwarzenegger in
ERASER

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

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Mubarak: Netanyahu setting Arabs on fire

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said in an interview published on Friday that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's policies were setting the Arab World "on fire."

He told the Israeli daily Maariv that Mr. Netanyahu, by opening a second entrance to a Jerusalem tourist tunnel near Muslim holy sites last week, had reignited the Palestinian uprising, which a historic 1993 interim peace deal had ended.

The tunnel opening sparked widespread gunbattles and clashes between Israelis and Palestinians. Since last week nearly 60 Palestinians and 16 Israelis have died. Mr. Mubarak last week declined to attend a Washington summit on the violence.

He said relations between Israel and Egypt, which in 1979 became the first Arab state to make peace with Israel, had been influenced by Mr. Netanyahu's rhetoric.

"The tunnel was not perhaps the principal thing but it certainly was the straw that broke the camel's back. The prime minister of Israel has to take into account that he is setting the entire Arab World on fire," Mr. Mubarak was quoted as saying.

He said the tunnel opening had to be taken in con-

text with Israel's lifting a freeze on building housing for Jews in the occupied Palestinian territories and the fact Mr. Netanyahu had yet to implement peace deals signed by the previous Israeli government.

Asked about his recent warnings that the intifada would be revived, Mr. Mubarak said:

"It has already begun and I am very afraid about what will happen in the future...What has begun has not yet ended. You carry the responsibility for peace and stability in the entire region."

Mr. Mubarak recalled suicide attacks against Israel carried out by militants opposed to peace accords.

"Under Rabin and Peres there were serious attacks by those opposed to the peace process," Mr. Mubarak said.

Mr. Mubarak said referring to Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister assassinated by a right-wing Jew in November and his successor Shimon Peres defeated by Mr. Netanyahu in May elections.

"With Netanyahu there are no attacks. Why? Because they think that he is not going towards peace and there is nothing to worry about."

Egyptian-Turkish call

Egypt and Turkey issued a

joint call on Friday for Mr. Netanyahu to close the controversial Jerusalem tunnel entrance.

Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan and Egyptian Prime Minister Kamal Ganzouri issued the statement at a ceremony in which the two countries — both with full relations with Israel — signed a number of bilateral agreements.

"The two prime ministers...expressed their concerns about the events in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza resulting from the opening of the tunnel under Al Aqsa Mosque by Israeli authorities. They called on the Israeli government to close the tunnel immediately and not to resort to force," it said.

"The two sides called on the Israeli government to take full responsibilities for agreements reached between Israel and Palestine, to renew without delay and with good intention of peace talks in line with the Madrid recommendations and to refrain from any action which threatens the peace talks, including changes in the status of Jerusalem and settlements," the Cairo statement said.

Mr. Erbakan is the first Islamist prime minister of the Turkish republic but has not cancelled military agreements reached this year with Israel before he took office.



Israeli paramilitary policemen armed with M-16 assault rifles patrol in the deserted streets of the West Bank city of Hebron on Friday (Reuters photo)

Regent: Jordan is fully supportive of Palestinians' struggle for their rights

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, has reaffirmed Jordanian determination in supporting the Palestinian struggle to regain their rights and their homeland.

"His Majesty King Hussein's trip to Washington in response to the invitation made by President Bill Clinton, has been solely motivated by the gravity of the situation regarding the closest issue to His Majesty's concern, that of Jerusalem," the Regent said.

"His Majesty's presence at the meeting is a clear indication of Jordan's desire to reaffirm in front of the international community the need for exerting concerted efforts, and the courage of adhering to the working programmes arising from the consecutive meetings."

"His Majesty's call for the activation of the world's conscience through sending an international fact finding commission to Jerusalem and the holy sites, will shed the light on this core issue, and will hopefully prevent the future repetition of any incident similar to that of the tunnel controversy," the Regent said. "The bulk of public opinion in Israel is supportive of the notion of peace based on agreed principles, and any party that rejects peace on the basis of ideology or conviction in order to escalate the level of confrontation ought to understand that the political tools of diplomacy have not yet been exhausted, for the objective of peace is still credible." His Royal Highness said.

The Regent reiterated King Hussein's call to capitalise on the current European and American positive roles as well as the Arab and Islamic aspirations as expressed in the recent conference of Arab and Islamic Awqaf ministers in Amman.

The Regent warned against succumbing to the "psychology of being victimised" in order not to lose "our credibility and be treated as victims, rather than a credible nation."

"In fact, the real victims are those innocent people who have fallen as a result of violence and counter-violence," he said. "The recent events have confirmed to the world that the Palestinian Arab people will defend their historic and legitimate rights regardless of the heavy consequences, and Jordan will exert all efforts in support of our Palestinian brothers in their pursuit of their legitimate rights on their own national homeland, and an appropriate place under the sun."

Commenting on the American shuttle diplomacy with Damascus, the Regent pointed out to the Syrian leader's call for benefiting from the American peace efforts and not wasting any opportunities that may result from those efforts.

House: Jerusalem crux of conflict

The Lower House of Parliament's Arab and International Affairs Committee on Thursday stressed that Jerusalem was the crux of the Arab-Israeli conflict, adding that de-escalation of the holy places will lead to the recurrence of conflict and violence in the region.

In a statement issued after a meeting, the committee hailed the Palestinian resistance to occupation and called for strengthening Palestinian national unity and for Islamic-Christian cohesion to counter Israeli plots to Judaize Jerusalem.

The statement reaffirmed that Jordanian and Palestinian security was closely inter-related and that the events on the Palestinian scene have great impact on the Jordanian scene.

The committee called on the United States, in its capacity as sponsor of the Middle East peace process, to put pressure on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to close the recently opened controversial tunnel, order his forces to withdraw from Hebron and stop settlement activities and to engage in serious negotiations with Arab partners in the peace process.

On the outcome of the Washington summit, the statement said the failure by the summit to achieve positive results proved that President Clinton's objective of the summit was meant to serve reelection campaign.

IAF urges halt to normalisation

The Islamic Action Front (IAF) party meanwhile urged the government and people to "adhere to their religious and historic responsibilities" in protecting Al Aqsa Mosque and to rise to the level of challenges, and called on the official media organisations to adopt a "positive stand" towards the Jerusalem issue.

The statement, a copy of which was sent to the Jordan Times, asked the citizens to refuse any kind of normalisation with Israel. "Those who occupied Arab and Islamic lands, those who desecrated the holy lands and expelled the Palestinian people."

"We call on the Palestinians to unite their positions and stands towards fighting the Israeli conspiracies to Judaize the Holy City," said the statement. The statement asserted that the Washington summit was a failure, "which was crystal clear in U.S. President Bill Clinton's final statement."

"It was obvious that the summit was nothing more than a call of self-restraint to lessen the anger of both the Palestinians and the Arabs," the IAF statement said.

"(President) Clinton does not exercise any kind of pressure on Israeli Premier Benjamin Netanyahu, who himself revealed another Israeli attempt to open another tunnel under Al Aqsa Mosque," said the statement.

The IAF was not surprised by the final statement of the summit because "we all know that the Israelis are adamant and obstinate who breached all peace agreements with the Arabs in the past," according to the statement.

Thus, the IAF "finds itself obligated to urge the Arab and Islamic leaders to adhere to their religious responsibilities to protect the holy shrines and to keep them under the Islamic sovereignty," it said.

Taleban force Afghans to pray under threat of guns

KABUL (Agencies) — Fiery sermons at mosques in Kabul on Friday warned residents that the penalty for ignoring strict Islamic rule would be quick and harsh.

Taleban fighters, brandishing Kalashnikovs, hauled men off the street and forced them into mosques to say their prayers.

Brushing aside Western criticism of their rigid Islamic rule, a senior Taleban leader vowed to capture all of Afghanistan and rule with an iron hand.

"We don't care what the West wants of us," said Syed Ghiasuddin, the Taleban's education minister and a member of the six-man council ruling Kabul.

"We will carry out the will of God," he shouted into a microphone and waved his fist into the air leading thousands of worshippers in shouts of "God is great."

In the first such sermon since the Taleban takeover a week ago, Mr. Ghiasuddin said human rights groups and foreign news agencies had been targeting the Taleban's imposition of a strict Islamic code.

"International agencies, human rights groups and Amnesty International say we have trampled women's rights but what we are doing is all based on Islamic Sharia law including amputating hands, executing and ordering people to the mosque five times a day," he said in a two-hour sermon at Kabul's main mosque.

The London-based human rights group Amnesty accused the Taleban on Wednesday of seizing up to 1,000 prisoners in house-to-house searches in the capital in what it called a reign of terror and said children and women were being ill-treated.

The Taleban entered Kabul last Friday after a lightning offensive swept the forces of President Burhanuddin Rabbani out of the capital. His forces and those of a rival warlord remain holed up in separate areas north of the capital.

The Taleban have issued decrees in the past week placing strict limitations on the activities of women, banning Western dress, card-playing, music and television and vowing stern punishment for those found drinking alcohol, taking drugs or having illicit sex-

ual relations.

While the moves — and accounts of women being beaten on the street — have alarmed human rights groups overseas, for many Afghans in the capital the past week has brought welcome peace and security after years of conflict.

Shopkeepers, from general store owners to carpet sellers, said they felt safer and reported only minor cases of harassment such as Taleban soldiers commandeering vehicles.

They said prices had fallen since the takeover as roads to Pakistan reopened. Some shops appeared well stocked with goods from South Asia and the Middle East.

Others said that while they were alarmed by the strict religious regime imposed by the Taleban, they believed it was a small price to pay for peace and an end to previous governments they described as corrupt and unpredictable.

"Our problem is that we have had no peace in Afghanistan. For people it does not really matter if it is fundamentalists or not. They have no job, no salaries and prices have been too high for too long," said one trader.

Ahead of Friday prayers, the streets of the dusty capital were quiet with most shops closed for the weekly holiday. Armed Taleban fighters lounged outside government departments while local people passed by warily.

There were few women on the streets and most of those who were, wore the full veil which allows only a webbed aperture for the face.

But as prayers approached, witnesses said the area around the mosque became more tense as Taleban guards were seen hauling people from vehicles and nearby stalls to worship.

"I just pretended to sleep and I saw the Taleban hitting people with sticks, pushing them into the mosque," one taxi driver said.

Hawkers nearby left their stalls open as they entered the mosque, which was, as a result, unusually full.

Inside, the atmosphere was more relaxed and some slept during the two-hour sermon in which Mr. Ghiasuddin defended the

Taleban's practices against accusations that it was foreign-sponsored.

He also defended the restrictions on women, saying the female was like a flower to be nurtured at home.

"It is like having a flower, or a rose, you water it and keep it at home for yourself to look at it and smell it. It is not supposed to be taken out of the house to be smelled," he said.

Schools for girls have been closed and the Taleban have said they will revamp the education system, which they say is too closely linked to communism.

Tired of 17 years of war, some willingly pay the price for peace, but others like Leila, a 30-year-old surgeon, are not. "It is true that the Taleban have brought peace, but at what price? We have to pay with our freedom and independence," said Leila who has stayed away from her job at Kabul's Jamburi Hospital.

When she went to work last Saturday, one day after the Taleban arrived in the city, she was pushed out by Taleban guards who had taken over the hospital.

That day she was to perform three operations, on two women and a man.

"I had been preparing for these complex operations for two weeks," she said. "They were poor and from villages around Kabul. They had no family here."

Leila said she was earning \$10 a month.

"I studied and worked to serve my country, but now I have no hope left," she said. "My husband and I put up with everything, but now we just want to escape this hell."

The International Committee of the Red Cross is negotiating with the Taleban to let women go back to work.

At the Red Cross-supplied Karte Se Hospital some nurses were allowed to return to work but covered from head to toe and only to treat women.

The Taleban already control much of the country. Most of the remaining territory is in northern Afghanistan and controlled by Uzbek warlord Rashid Dostum.

Tunis holds 2 in Cools case

TUNIS (AP) — Authorities said Thursday they have arrested two men in the 1991 assassination of Belgium's former vice premier, boosting the probe after years of fruitless searching.

Justice Minister Sadok Chaabane said Tunisia "will assure Belgium of its complete cooperation" in the investigation of the execution-style slaying of Andre Cools.

But Tunisia has no extradition agreement with Belgium, and authorities here said the country typically does not extradite its citizens as a matter of principle.

Officials said a judge from the Belgian city of Liege — where Cools was gunned down on July 18, 1991 — was expected to come to Tunis soon to interview the two suspects, Abdul Majid Almi, 19, and Abuejell Ben Ibrahim, 26.

Investigators have long suspected that Cools, a socialist, was killed by two hired guns from Tunisia working on orders from Belgian criminals. Almi and Ben Ibrahim allegedly were recruited in Sicily for the killing.

Efforts under way to secure release of 4 Bosnia-held Jordanian businessmen

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Efforts were under way on Friday to secure the release of four Jordanian businessmen who were arrested in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, on a diplomatically-arranged visit to attend a trade fair.

The identities of the four were not immediately available and Information Minister Marwan Muasher said Transport Minister Nasser Lawzi was working on the bizarre affair to secure their freedom.

The visit of the four Jordanian businessmen as well as 24 Iraqis were arranged by the Bosnian diplomatic mission in Amman. The entire group was arrested on Tuesday, three days after they arrived in the Bosnian capital aboard a Jordanian military plane, reports from Bosnia said.

According to the reports, the arrests of the 28 came on the grounds that they did not have valid visas to enter Bosnia-Herzegovina. It was

not clear why the action was taken three days after the group's arrival in the country.

No comment was available from the Bosnian mission in Amman on Friday. Minister Lawzi could not be reached on Friday.

Dr. Muasher said he was informed that the four, whom he did not identify, were arrested after their arrival in Sarajevo along with the Iraqis on a Jordanian military plane that was headed there as part of the Kingdom's participation in the international peacekeeping operations in former Yugoslavia.

"It was strange that they were arrested since they had gone to Bosnia on a trip arranged by the Bosnian mission here," Dr. Muasher told the Jordan Times. However, he said, he was not fully aware of the details of the affair.

The arrests came amid renewed U.S. warnings that volunteer fighters from Islamic countries still posed a threat to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)-led

peace force in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"But there was no indication from Bosnian or U.S. officials that the group had any connection to that threat," the Associated Press (AP) reported.

Passengers on military flights to Bosnia are generally cleared at the point of departure, not at the NATO-controlled Sarajevo airport, the agency noted.

It quoted a Bosnian Foreign Ministry statement issued on Thursday as confirming that the men were in the country for a business and tourism fair in the central Bosnian city of Zenica.

"Based on current information, there is no threat to American citizens," the U.S. embassy told the AP.

Haider Murad, president of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, said the federation was not informed of the visit nor the reported arrest of the four.

Ali Dajani, an advisor at the Amman Chamber of Industry, said the chamber was also not aware of the trip or the reported arrest.

COLUMN 8

U. K.'s 'house of horrors' to be turned to dust

GLOUCESTER, England (R) — Britain's "House of horrors," home of husband and wife killers Fred and Rosemary West and burial place of nine young women and girls, is to be demolished and every brick ground to dust. The local council in Gloucester, western England, said Friday the destruction of the three-storey house at 25, Cromwell Street would begin Monday. The next door number 23 property, now derelict, has also been bought by the council for demolition. To stop ghoulish souvenir hunters, every element of the houses will be methodically destroyed. The bricks will be ground to dust, every floor-board burned and every fitting melted down. Together the Wests picked up girls and sexually tormented them, perhaps for days, before killing them, cutting up their bodies and burying them in their cellar or garden along with the ropes, gags and masks that restrained them. Builder Fred West, 53, hanged himself on Jan. 1, 1995, in his prison cell while awaiting trial on 12 murder counts. Rosemary West, 42, is serving life imprisonment after being convicted in November of murdering 10 girls and young women, including her 16-year-old daughter Heather and her unloved eight-year-old stepdaughter Charmaine. The demolition of the houses is expected to take around two weeks. At the end of the demolition a thick concrete "cap" will cover the cleared site.

Designer gets a pie in the face

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Fashion designer Oscar De La Renta got a pie in the face from an animal-rights activist who objected to the fur used in his outfits. The fur incident occurred during a charity fashion show Wednesday in Dallas, Texas. The culprit, 22-year-old People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals member Kelly Nichols, shouted, "fur. Shame," before carrying out her slapstick protest. "I didn't like the taste of it," the designer joked after the incident, adding that he made it a point of only using fur from non-endangered species.

Envoy compose a tango

MONTEVIDEO (AFP) — To celebrate the 75th anniversary of his country's relations with Uruguay, Japanese Ambassador Katsuhiko Tsunoda composed a tango that was played this week at the Foreign Ministry to the delight of all those present. El Pais daily reported. "Alma de Montevideo" (Montevideo's Soul) is a tribute to the Uruguayan capital and to Mr. Tsunoda's musical talent. It is the second tango composed by the ambassador, whose wife, Kasuko, is also a composer and a singer.

France launches new easy-to-open oyster

PARIS (AFP) — A French company is marketing a new easy-to-open oyster to help people who have never acquired the knack of opening the messy mollusc. The Ecal Company hopes to sell 3,500 tonnes of the oysters which come with a wax seal and says they will be only slightly more expensive than regular oysters which sell for between 30 to 40 francs (\$6 to \$8) per dozen. They have been made easy to open by grinding a notch in the shell opposite the oyster's central muscle. The notch is covered with sealing wax and all the oyster-opener has to do is insert his oyster knife in the wax to cut the muscle. A year ago another easy-to-open oyster, filled with a thread which was pulled out the mollusc's central muscle, was launched. But it ran into legal problems after a conflict between the inventor and the company marketing the oysters.